Disability Equality Policy & Scheme

Albright Education Centre

Sandwell Home and Hospital Tuition Service

Signed by Chair of Governors:	
Date ratified by Governing Body:	02.07.2025
Date of Review:	02.07.2028

Disability Equality Policy and Scheme

Albright Education Centre is committed to promoting equality for all. This statement represents the response of the Management Committee to its duties to promote equality for people with a disability.

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality of status and opportunity for all pupils, other members of the school and service users, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or beliefs, as defined within existing equalities legislation.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how we will fulfil our duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics' and embed fairness and equality in everyday practice in the service.

The nine characteristics defined by law are: age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, race, disability, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In these areas we will ensure there is no direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The Management Committee is under a duty to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination. The Management Committee works with and through the Senior Leadership Team to discharge their responsibility, for example: by raising awareness, providing training and monitoring outcomes.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person with a disability as someone who has 'a physical and/or mental impairment` which has what the law calls, 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

- '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 Equality Act also covers those with:

- Severe disfigurements- impairments controlled or corrected by the use of:
  - medication
  - prostheses
  - an aid or otherwise;
- progressive symptomatic conditions
- a history of impairment; and
- children under the age of 6 with impairments which, in an older person, would result in that person being covered.

Since December 2005 persons with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are also covered at the point of diagnosis.

But **excluded** are those with:

- an addiction to or dependency on nicotine, tobacco or other non-prescribed drugs or substances
- seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever) and
- certain mental illnesses with anti-social consequences.

The Management Committee's Duty

The Management Committee will discharge its responsibilities towards staff, pupils and those using the school's services by ensuring that people with a disability are not treated less favourably in the following aspects as relevant:

- accessibility to the premises and facilities;
- accessibility to the curriculum;
- accessibility of associated educational services;
- training of staff and pupils.

The school's policy is to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- eliminate disability-related harassment;
- promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability;
- encourage people with a disability to participate in public life;
- take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment.

Accessibility Plans

The Management Committee's Accessibility Plan follows the Local Authority's guidelines and aims, as far as is reasonably practicable, to:

- enable staff with a disability to have access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties
- ensure that the needs of visitors with a disability are taken into account;
- increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the school curriculum
- improve the physical environment of the school in order to enable pupils with a disability to take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to pupils with a disability, within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Unlawful Discrimination

The school will ensure that discrimination is prohibited in:

- the selection and appointment and promotion arrangements for staff

- staff conditions of service
- staff training
- the arrangements for determining pupil admissions
- the terms on which admission is offered
- refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an admission application
- provision of education or associated services (including educational visits and extra-curricular activities)
- exclusions
- victimisation and harassment
- failing to take steps to ensure that pupils with a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with all other pupils in the arrangements for determining admission to the school and in relation to the provision of education and associated services. However, alterations to buildings and the provision of auxiliary aids and services are not required under this law.

Pupils:

The school values the full range of its pupils and seeks to ensure that its practices are fully inclusive. Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate pupils with a disability, while bearing in mind the interests of other pupils. The school is required to make, under the terms of the Children and Families Act 2014:

- improvements in access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability;
- physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra-curricular activities); and
- improvement in the provision of information in a range of formats for pupils with a disability.

There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not pupils with behaviour issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following may be underlying reasons for poor behaviour:

- mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy.

(NB Behaviour difficulties arising from social and/or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act)

The school will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of pupils with a disability in the school.

Education and Associated Services

For pupils these requirements will be deemed to include:

- Preparation for entry to the school
- The curriculum
- Teaching and learning
- Classroom organisation
- Timetabling
- Grouping

- Access to school facilities
- Activities that supplement the curriculum e.g. a visiting speaker
- School sports
- School policies
- Breaks and lunchtimes
- Serving school meals
- Interaction with peers
- Assessment and examination arrangements
- Discipline and sanctions – Relational Policy
- Exclusion procedures
- School clubs and activities
- Educational visits
- Arrangements for working with other agencies
- Preparation for the next phase of education
- Administration of medicines
- First Aid

The Scheme

Consultation:

The school is committed to the continuing involvement of people with a disability in the development of this statement. We will continue to take into account the views of:

- local organisations for people with a disability
- members of staff with a disability
- the parents/carers of pupils on roll with a disability
- Union and association representatives
- Pupil voice.

Staff:

The school aims, within the constraints of resources available, to ensure that no member of staff with disabilities is less favourably treated in the school's procedures and practices in respect of:

- Recruitment, appraisal, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the premises.

Pupils:

The school aims, within the constraints of resources available, to enable each pupil to fulfil his/her potential, within an educational programme that has development of the whole person at its core.

The school aims to fulfil the requirements of the legislation to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the school premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

The school will examine each disability case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate the needs of pupils with a disability on an individual basis.

Pupils with a disability are identified through the completion of the pupil referral form prior to admission and in the initial home visit during the initial meeting. Relevant information is given to all staff during staff meetings and /or by staff e-mails Progress is monitored to assess whether or not further adjustments / new measures are necessary through regular pupil reviews.

Since 1st September 2012 the reasonable adjustments duty for schools and local authorities has included a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. This duty is contained in section 20(5) of the Equality Act 2010.

The words 'auxiliary aid' means aids and services. An aid is a piece of equipment which helps the disabled person, such as a special chair, adapted text, or special computer equipment or software. A service is something people provide, such as personal assistance or therapy. Where appropriate the school will seek to provide the aid or service required, or will work with other service providers to obtain aids and services not available within school.

Premises

To meet its obligations, the school will ensure that the needs of staff and pupils with a disability are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the school campus.

When determining the priorities for the use of funding, the school will take into account the need to make the school more accessible for staff and pupils with disability.

The school will budget annually for reasonable minor adjustments to the environment to enable a member of staff and/or a pupil with a disability to have access to the full teaching and learning of the school.

The school will bear in mind health and safety requirements and the interests of other pupils in all the above considerations.

Medical Conditions

In September 2014 a new duty came into force for governing bodies to ensure arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with medical conditions.

Children and young people with medical conditions are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to the school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition will be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in the school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. The Management Committee will seek to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.

Although there is no requirement on teaching staff to administer medicines or undertake personal and health care procedures, management committees are required to ensure there are arrangements in place, including ensuring sufficient members of support staff are appropriately trained to undertake these roles as part of their core job description.

To fulfill this obligation, the school has designated first aiders and support staff who have undergone specific and appropriate training as necessary to meet the medical needs of

individual pupils with medical conditions. Training is ongoing and enables the school to support pupils with a range of medical needs.

Where a pupil requires medication to be administered, trained staff are permitted to give medication with written consent from parents (and medication clearly labelled).

Discrimination in Admissions

The Management Committee will ensure that pupils with a disability are not discriminated against:

- through the criteria they determine for admission to the service
- by refusing, or deliberately not accepting, an application from a person with a disability for admission to the service

Action on Transfer into the school

On acceptance into the service, additional liaison time is allocated for pupils with a disability and their families to ensure that the pupil's educational needs and the school's requirements are fully understood by staff.

Teaching and Learning

Staff:

The development needs of staff with a disability will be discussed with the member of staff on a regular basis.

Where necessary, support staff time will be allocated, relevant to the needs of the member of staff with a disability.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of members of staff with a disability.

Within the constraints of financial resources, the school aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to teach effectively.

Harassment:

The school values each member of staff for their contribution to the school and will seek to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable no member of staff is disadvantaged by reason of his/her disability.

The Management Committee will take positive action against any employee's harassment of another employee. All employees have a duty not to harass other employees on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognised by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Head Teacher (or in the case of harassment by the Head Teacher, to the Chair of the Management Committee).

Pupils:

The detailed arrangements for supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are included in the school's SEND Information Report.

In all teaching and learning activities, a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no pupil is excluded from learning.

Teaching staff will be given, as relevant, advice from appropriate external agencies regarding the learning needs of pupils with a disability, (such as the Sensory Impairment Service).

Off-site Activities

Educational visits and learning outside of the classroom experiences are planned to ensure that ALL pupils will be able to take part.

A risk assessment is always carried before a visit; there will be a more a more detailed risk assessment carried out for pupils with a disability or medical need. Parents and pupils will be consulted as part of the process and, where appropriate, specialist support staff, especially for residential visits, will be provided.

Liaison with parents

The Governors will report to parents annually on:

- The Accessibility Plan;
- How the Management Committee/responsible body helps pupils with disability gain access to the curriculum and
- What the Management Committee/responsible body does to ensure fair treatment for pupils with a disability.

The school will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all pupils with a disability through the provision of designated staff members with allocated time and appropriate communication skills.

Whenever appropriate, information to home will be provided in different formats to take account of disability.

Training

As far as is reasonable and practicable, appropriate training for staff and pupils will be included in an annual programme.

Staff Training

Training will be given to staff to ensure understanding of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010 and how actions at school level may be undertaken to ensure inclusion of members of staff and pupils with disability.

All staff (teaching and support) must attend training regarding duties to members of staff and/or students with a disability under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010, and to attend up-dating sessions when deemed necessary by the Head Teacher.

All teaching staff have training regarding improved practice in adaptive teaching for all pupils including those with disability.

Regular staff training will be undertaken regarding the needs for learning of particular pupils with a disability.

Support staff working with members of staff and/or pupils with a disability will be given relevant training.

Responsibilities

Management Committee:

The Management Committee has established a Resources Sub Committee which will:

- Oversee the implementation of all the school's policies and practices in this area, including Disability Inclusion
- Consider what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made
- Make recommendations to the Head Teacher with a view to improving access to teaching and learning
- Consider the service's systems and procedures for making staff, parents and pupils aware of the policies;
- Consider the service's Accessibility Plan and
- Review the Plan annually.

Head teacher:

- to oversee the implementation of the policy and scheme;
- to report progress as required to the Management Committee:

- the Head teacher will report to the Management Committee on members of staff who have a disability, and the steps taken to ensure that they are not treated less favourably;
- the Head teacher will report on staff training issues relevant to the scheme
- the Head teacher will report to the Management Committee on relevant pupil activities and ensure that reasonable adjustments will have been identified and implemented;
- the Head teacher will ensure that the school's Accessibility Plan has been reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to the Management Committee;
- the Head teacher will ensure that regular liaison with parents of pupils with a disability takes place. Reports on these meetings and any correspondence with parents and pupils regarding their disabilities will be contained in the school's reports to the Management Committee.

All staff:

All staff have a duty to ensure, as far as is practicable, adherence to the intentions and purpose of this scheme, and to bring any potential shortcomings or difficulties to the attention of a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Monitoring, Inspection and Review:

The Governors will ensure that the working of the Scheme and Accessibility Plan is monitored. The Head teacher's report to the Management Committee will report on related issues.

The Management Committee will report to the Local Authority as required.

The Governors recognise that these duties are monitored by OFSTED for England through their inspections.