



# St Gabriel's R.C. High School

## Accessibility Plan

Responsible Staff:

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Mrs Jayne Roberts

Delegated Member of Staff (SENDCo): Mrs Ruth Shiels

SEND link Governor: Mrs L Eaton

Nov 2019 (modified April 2021)

Review April 2022

Governors May 2021

## **1. Purpose of this Policy and Accessibility Plan**

At St Gabriel's RC High School we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the range of activities offered by the school.

At St Gabriel's RC High School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our community

## **2. The Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

### **Background Information**

#### **Definition of Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 to cover education.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law.

Schools are legally obliged as follows:

- i. Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- ii. To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils to ensure that they are not at a substantial disadvantage, and
- iii. To plan to increase access to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information (documented in an Accessibility Plan).

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 extended the definition of disability to include people with a hearing or visual impairment, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autistic spectrum disorder, Down's syndrome and hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, diabetes, cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, sickle cell anaemia and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included. If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, those who have recovered from cancer, or people with a history of mental illness), then they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life. The Equality Act 2010 extended protection against discrimination to pupils who are pregnant or have recently given birth, or who are undergoing gender reassignment.

#### **Protected Characteristics:**

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

### **3. The Duty**

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard to the following when carrying out their functions as employers, as providers of education and associated services and as providers of services to the wider community:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminating harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled persons
- Positive Action
- Positive Action provisions allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. Such measures will need to be proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim.

### **4. Unlawful Discrimination**

St Gabriel's RC High School will ensure that discrimination is avoided in:

- The selection, appointment and promotion arrangements for staff;
- Staff conditions of service;
- Staff training;
- The arrangements for determining pupil admission;
- 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, extra-curricular activities and youth service activities);
- Exclusions

### **5. Pupils**

Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled pupils and young people, whilst bearing in mind the interests of other pupils and young people. The school is required to make under the terms of SENDA 2001;

- Improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled pupils and young people;

- Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra – curricular activities); and
- Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils and young people
- The Equality Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils
- There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not pupils with behavioural issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following can be underlying reasons for poor behaviour; mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, and epilepsy.
- The school will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled pupils in the school.

*(N.B. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act.)*

## **6. Pupils - Education and Associated Services**

The School will examine each individual case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate every individual's needs.

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

All relevant information is recorded on the individual's school record (staff or pupil).

A review will be held at least annually as part of the annual Performance Management programme in the case of staff, or as part of the whole school review process and the annual special needs review in the case of pupils.

Risk assessments will be carried out on behalf of disabled staff, pupils and visitors on an annual basis, and as circumstances change.

These risk assessments will be the responsibility of;

- HR in the case of a new member of staff
- The Head of Year with the Assistant Headteacher/Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) or delegated staff member as appropriate for pupils
- The member of staff that the visitor has come to see or whom they will be working with.

## **7. Action on Transfer into the School**

At transfer to St Gabriel's RC High School, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled pupils and their families to ensure that the pupil's educational needs and the school's requirements are fully understood by staff at the feeder school, parents/carers, and pupil, and to ensure that there is a smooth transition.

## **8. Achievements of Disabled Pupils**

Records are kept of all pupils' achievements including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability. Any individual feedback from pupils, parents or carers regarding specific actions are recorded on

the pupil's file. Achievements of all pupils are valued at St Gabriel's RC High School whether they are of an academic, social or spiritual value.

## **9. Educational Opportunities available to Disabled Pupils at St Gabriel's RC High School**

- Disabled parking areas in place for pupils being dropped off and ramped access to the building
- Alternative provision to access to all areas of curriculum teaching will be put in place if a pupil is physically unable to go to class.
- Wherever possible an alternative location will be found off site if specific teaching requirements cannot be accessed at St Gabriel's RC High School.
- We will endeavour to ensure that all pupils have equal access to educational visits/trips.
- All pupils have the right to attend all trips and residential visits. This will be achieved through careful consultation with parents/carers, planning, funding and adequate staffing of visits.
- 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.
- Additional careers guidance will be offered in order that disabled pupils have the same opportunities as their peers to access careers advice.
- Access arrangements will allow equal access to examinations, so that pupils can fulfil their potential.
- Pupils will be entered for the level of examination which is appropriate for their level of ability.

## **10. Sensory Support for Pupils**

- The School will make provision to enable pupils with sensory support needs to access the full curriculum, for instance by providing documents in alternative formats, and by considering classroom seating and accommodation arrangements.
- The School has Hearing Loop technology for pupils and visitors to the School.

## **11. Parents with Disabilities**

- The School will meet the needs of parents and carers with disabilities wherever possible, for instance by providing documentation in alternative formats if requested.
- Parents' Evenings will be held in classrooms which are accessible. On request, arrangements can be made for meetings to be held in a separate classroom to reduce background noise.

## **12. Involvement of people with additional needs in developing the policy**

As we look to develop the Disability Equality Policy, we will continue to consult with:

- The parents/carers of disabled pupils who would like to come to St Gabriel's RC High School, to identify particular needs and to ensure that, where possible, these are met;
- The pupils themselves to ensure that all of their needs are being met;
- The Health and Safety Executive in order to ensure that any modification of the buildings does not contravene legislation to protect any pupils, staff, or visitors to the school.

We will continue to use these mechanisms for consultation in the future but will also seek to widen the spectrum of those consulted, specifically:

- Through encouraging disabled pupils to have representation in all school groups.
- Through setting up a focus group to collect and collate pupil views.

### **13. Recruitment, Development and Retention of Disabled Employees**

#### **i. Recruitment of Staff**

The School application form specifically requests disclosure of disability information which is then recorded within the School on appointment. This is used to inform suitable provision for the successful applicant.

#### **ii. Development of staff**

The school will analyse the information in respect of disabled staff:

- In teaching, teaching support, administrative support and site support roles;
- At all levels of seniority in the school;
- As permanent or temporary members of staff, full-time or part-time or casual staff;
- In training and professional development opportunities
- In disciplinary and capability procedures;
- In harassment and bullying procedures;
- As contract staff for example: contract cleaners and agency supply teachers;
- Among those who take sick leave
- Among those leaving the profession early

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a request; often these discussions occur on an informal basis, but these can be formalised on request.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff. Other appropriate adjustments may be made as agreed between the member of staff, the Head/Senior Leadership Team and HR.

Within the constraints of financial resources the School aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to act effectively.

The School values the wellbeing of all members of staff. Where a member of staff is disabled or has additional needs, Occupational Health services will be engaged at an early stage. The School actively supports and contributes to any Access to Work resources that are recommended as a result of a referral to Occupational Health.

The annual revision of the Disability Equality Scheme will involve an analysis of whether appropriate adjustments are being made for staff with disabilities. Support provided to enable disabled staff to return to work or continue in service will also be analysed at annual review

### **14. School Facility Lettings**

St Gabriel's RC High School makes facilities and resources available on a lettings basis to all members of the community. (There is a managed system of hiring facilities and only buildings with 100% DDA access are available to hirers.) Not currently due to restrictions

## **15. Discrimination in Admissions**

The Governing Body ensures that disabled pupils, young people and adult pupils are not discriminated against:

- Through the criteria determined for admission to the School, or
- By refusing an application from a disabled person for admission to the School, based on their disability

## **16. Off-site Activities**

St Gabriel's RC High School will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that pupils, young people and staff with disabilities are given access to off-site activities organised by the school. This responsibility lies with the officer responsible for Educational Visits (Principal.)

## **17. Eliminating Harassment and Bullying**

St Gabriel's RC High School strives to achieve a positive, encouraging atmosphere conducive to nurturing positive attitudes towards all people with disability of any sort.

Should incidents of bullying/harassment occur they will be dealt with in line with the sanctions set out in the Behaviour Policy.

The Governing Body will take positive action against any employees, pupils or other person (visitors / volunteers) who are involved in the harassment of another employee, pupil or other person. All members of the school community i.e. employees, pupils or others have a duty not to harass others on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognised by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Principal (or in the case of harassment by the Principal, to the Chair of the Governing Body).

## **18. Membership of the Governing Body**

All nominations received to become a member of the Governing Body of St Gabriel's RC High School are treated equally. Disabled representatives are welcome and proceedings are made accessible. The SEND Governor is available to parents and their contact details may be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors.

## **19. Liaison with Parents**

The governors will make available to parents/carers information relating to:

- The Accessibility Plan;
- How the School helps pupils with disability gain access to the curriculum; what the school does to ensure fair treatment for disabled pupils.

St Gabriel's RC High School will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all pupils with disability through the provision of designated staff (e.g. SENDCo, Pastoral Staff, Heads of Years).

Wherever possible, information for home will be provided in different formats if requested.

## **20. Training**

Appropriate training for staff, pupils and young people to further understanding and implementation of the DDA and SENDA will be provided. The SENDCo and SLT are responsible for organising whole school training on DDA and SENDA issues.

Staff working with pupils with individual needs will have access to suitable and relevant training as necessary.

Staff will be given, as relevant, advice from external agencies regarding the learning needs of individual pupils.

## **21. Responsibilities**

### **i. Governing Body Responsibilities**

The Governing Body ensuring that disabled people 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 the education of pupils

The Governing Body will:

- Oversee the implementation of all the school's policies and practices including the area of Disability, Equality and Inclusion;
- Review what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made;
- Consider the School's Accessibility Plan; and
- Review the Plan annually.

The Governing Body is also responsible for the appointment of a SEN link governor. The link governor covers SEN provision, and has additional responsibilities in overseeing the implementation, review & monitoring and future development of this policy and Accessibility Plan.

### **ii. Principal Responsibilities**

The Principal will:

- Along with the Governing Body ensure the implementation of the Plan
- Ensure that the Accessibility Plan has been reviewed periodically and
- Updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to the governing body;
- Ensure that regular liaison with parents/carers of pupils with additional needs takes place.

### **iii. Senior Leadership Team Responsibilities**

- The positive promotion and implementation of the policy (Assistant Principal)
- Report progress as required to the Governing Body (Assistant Principal)
- Specific staff with responsibility for various aspects of the policy (see Accessibility Plan for details)
- The member of staff with responsibility for staff training and staff induction (HR)

#### **iv. SENDCo Responsibilities**

- To provide access to regular relevant training opportunities & updates
- To include DDA issues in the induction programme
- Undertake SEN annual reviews and reporting, in addition to on-going and regular monitoring

#### **v. Staff with responsibilities (e.g. Heads of Department/Year)**

- Implementation of the policy / scheme and reporting, recording as appropriate.
- Staff development within their area

#### **vi. Teaching and Support Staff Responsibilities**

- Familiarity with the policy / scheme and assist in its implementation
- Undertake training as relevant

#### **vii. Expectations of Pupils**

- To treat disabled people as favourably as others, and to and apply the school code of conduct at all times.

## **22. Accessibility Plan**

Our Accessibility Plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils and young people can participate in the School curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of the School in order to enable disabled pupils and young people to take advantage of education and associated services;
- Enable disabled staff to have reasonable access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- Ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable the needs of disabled visitors to the site are taken into account.

## **23. Impact Assessment**

- The Deputy Head is responsible for monitoring the impact of the policy and Accessibility Plan, and reporting to the Governors on an annual basis.

## **24. Responsible Persons**

- **Senior Member of Staff Responsible: Deputy Head, Mrs Jayne Roberts**
- **Delegated Member of Staff (SENDCo): Mrs Ruth Shiels**
- **SEND link Governor: Mrs L Eaton**

## **25. Reviewing /Monitoring**

The action plan will be reviewed and monitored by the School Leadership Team and Governors annually. This Disability Equality policy will be reviewed and published on the school's website each year.

### **Checklist for school Leadership Team and Governors**

- Is information collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is pupil achievement monitored by disability? Are there trends or patterns in data that require additional action?
- Are disabled pupils encouraged to participate in school life?
- Is bullying and harassment of disabled pupils and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are Parents' Evenings and other events which parent or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats which are accessible if required?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?