



Walkwood
Church of England  Middle School

Disability Equality Scheme and School Accessibility Plan

Approval granted:

15 July 2024

Review date:

Summer 2027

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

John 10: 10

“Church of England Schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each pupil to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child’s fulfilment. We want all pupils to want to engage in learning in a safe and welcoming ethos.”

Valuing All God’s Children, Church of England, 2014

“The core purpose of any Church school is to maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God.”

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) 2012



Aims

At Walkwood Church of England Middle school we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled children and staff. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in delivering or accessing our services.

Walkwood Church of England Middle School's Disability Scheme and Accessibility Plan will demonstrate how we ensure that the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, 2010 are met.

At Walkwood Church of England Middle School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by those that learn, teach and visit here. Therefore, Walkwood Church of England Middle School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices or service delivery.

This school will promote positive attitudes to disability and will not tolerate harassment of people with any form of physical or mental impairment.

Introduction

Walkwood Church of England Middle school aims to make reasonable adjustments to make sure the school environment is accessible as possible. The accessibility plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 2010. It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled students", issued by DfES in July 2002.

Walkwood Church of England Middle School buildings are generally equipped to meet the needs of disabled students and staff:

- the school is built over several different levels with access to the ground level on each floor
- use of classrooms can be rotated to meet students' needs as required
- all public-access rooms, including front and back entrances, toilets, library, and hall can be accessed via disabled ramps
- there is an accessible toilet and wash facility located within the main building

Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 2010:

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

What 'substantial' and 'long-term' mean:

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed



- 'long-term' means 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

Key Objective

Walkwood Church of England recognises that we have a responsibility to meet the needs of all through promoting inclusion and diversity. Therefore, focussing on reducing and eliminating barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, prospective pupils and our adult users with a disability.

Principles

1. Compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act is consistent with the school's aims and equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEND policy;
2. The school recognises its duty under the Disability Discrimination Act (as amended by the SENDA):
 - not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
 - not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
 - to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
 - to publish an Accessibility Plan.
- 1) In performing their duties, Academy Representatives and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002).
- 2) The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
- 3) The school provides all students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000 framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - setting suitable learning challenges;
 - responding to students' diverse learning needs;
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of students.



Activity

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to use facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils and staff – designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled persons and stop disabled people being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity.
- On recruitment panels we give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities on the grounds of sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Walkwood Church of England Middle School has identified the following points for action as part of its School Development Plan, in order to achieve the key objective.

Delivery of the curriculum

School staff receive training in making the curriculum accessible to all students, and are aware of its importance.

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts. Walkwood Church of England Middle School is supported in its work with pupils with disabilities by Chadsgrove Teaching School.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school policies on Behaviour and Anti-Bullying take full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustments for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on exclusions and absence from school for evidence of overrepresentation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

Addressing prejudice and prejudice-based bullying

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs;
- prejudices around race, religion or beliefs;
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation.

Staff are made aware of how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

Auditing

- Attendance data is scrutinised by College Leaders, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads, tutors and Attendance Safe-guarders.
- Data in relation to behaviour and exclusions is scrutinised within school but also by the Ethos, Inclusion and Care Committee of Governors.
- There is a rolling programme for the review of policies.



Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of students and other users with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when placing a Condition Improvement Fund bid, as well as improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

For example:

- possible installation of a second platform lift in the Joy Vater Building;
- improvements to the slabs outside the Design and Technology block;
- improved lighting to the pathways leading to the main entrance.

Provision of information in other formats

The school is aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

