

THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

Academy Trust - Special School

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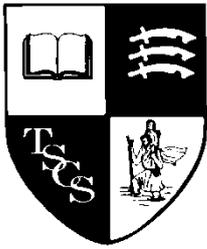
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"Christopher's Cottage"



A Residential Respite Care /
Sports Hall Facility



THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL - ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

First Written: December 2012

Revisions: April 2017

Background

This Accessibility Policy pays due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Equality Duty which was introduced into the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in 2005. It set out

- A general duty to promote disability equality
- A requirement for schools to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme showing how they are meeting the general duty.

As a special school primarily for children with disabilities, this school is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its pupils, employees 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 and service delivery.

This school will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.

Purpose

The purpose of our disability equality scheme is to show how the school is meeting the duty to promote disability equality for disabled students, staff, parents and members of the public.

The Equality Act 2010 required us to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability – related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
- Take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even when that involves more favourable treatment

The Equality Act requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage.



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Our scheme applies to all school buildings, including Christopher's Cottage, Sports Hall, Communication and Interaction Centre, Creative Arts Block and Practical Block, Family Room and everything that happens in and around the school. It builds upon existing policies such as Special Educational Needs and Equality Policy.

Definition of Disability

The DDA 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”.

Definition of the terms:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an 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 includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit 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.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on 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 risk of physical danger.

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 and Special Educational Needs

The Education Act 1996 says that *‘a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her’*. Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or otherwise different from provision that is normally available in the area.

It is likely that most pupils of The St. Christopher School Academy Trust will be recognised as having a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees

We continue to gather information at the point of recruitment, through application form and questionnaire about disability. All information is in line with policies on confidentiality and equal opportunities. Such information will be used to inform policies where necessary.

Education opportunities available to and achievements of disabled pupils

Monitoring of different groups of disability is undertaken in order to ensure all pupils have equal access to facilities within the school. This is in line with self-evaluation principles as we look to investigate any possible differences in achievement or progress in these groups. An example of this is an analysis of progress of pupils affected by Autistic Spectrum Disorder and other groups/sub-groups of disability to ensure they are not being disadvantaged.

The use of school data analysis systems allows us to investigate any possible differences in any sub-group of pupils within the school and formulate changes to the school procedures as necessary. This can also take the form of positive discrimination. An example of this was in the creation of the 'nurture' group for quieter, less gregarious pupils, who although coping in the main school, did not appear to make as much progress and thus a special Key Stage 2 group was formed. The progress of this group of pupils is monitored to ensure the benefits are clear for pupils who are placed in it.

Personalised Learning

The development of personalised curriculum monitoring and assessment has enabled the school to ensure any group or individual is not discriminated against. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully and additional support and input is put into place for anyone who needs it. Such additional support is monitored for its impact on progress.

Eliminate harassment

Pupils are encouraged to treat each other with respect and consideration regardless of race, gender, sexuality or disability. Harassment/bullying of any member of the school community is not tolerated and pupils are encouraged to discuss any incidents immediately.

Steps to aid positive relationships are an integral part of the day to day work within this school and form part of discussions regularly.

Any harassment should be reported to staff.

Harassment/bullying of any member of the school community including staff and visitors to the school is totally unacceptable and must not be permitted or condoned. Any recipient of harassment has the right to complain about it. Complaints should be raised swiftly after the event so that evidence can be examined. Any harassment towards staff or visitors to the school should be reported to a senior staff member.

Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

All pupils in the school will be considered as disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act. It is a major part of the ethos of the school that positive self-image is encouraged for all.

Personal, social and emotional aspects of education, promoting positive values, self-confidence and self-esteem is an integral part of daily routine. Praise and reward systems operate throughout the school to promote positive attitudes to self and others.

Specific work is carried out in PSHCE lessons in the secondary department to discuss barriers to achievement and to ensure appropriate empathy is engendered.

Encourage disabled people's participation in public life

The St. Christopher School Academy Trust has an elected School Council to represent the views of pupils. Monitoring of the nature of disabilities of pupils on the school council could be undertaken to ensure equality of access of all disabled groups within the school.

Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in Southend Youth Council and undertake questionnaires on behalf of the Youth Council.

Steps to take into account people's disabilities will be taken wherever this is reasonable and adjustments will be made accordingly for staff or pupils, for example the use of assisted technology such as iPads to aid communication for those pupils with limited verbal language. This will be part of the action plan regarding the implementation of any specific steps for individuals as and when they occur. This will be on an individual basis and be part of any personalised learning programme for pupils and personalised working practice regime for individual members of staff.

Publication

A list of policies is published on the school website. Copies of the policy are available from the school office for those who request one.

Reviewing and revising the scheme

The policy will be reviewed within the school processes for self-evaluation. Any recognised need to make reasonable adjustments will be made to the school's practice, procedures, grounds, resources, staffing as appropriate.

All new buildings will conform to necessary DDA requirements.

**THE ST CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Aim	Actions	By Whom	Start	Finish	Evidence that it is completed	Impact
Physical Improvements to increase access to education and associated services	Creation of a dedicated 'Family Room', a separate building on the school site with independent access, to be used for Parenting Groups/Courses/Coffee mornings, with a play area for younger children.	JM/Finance & Premises Committee	December 2012	Completed September 2013	New room used extensively to run courses/support groups/coffee mornings, for used by parents/carers of children across the borough, not just those with children at our school. Provision of play area within the room will allow parents with young children to attend courses, that they otherwise may not have had access to. Can also be used as a private space for meetings and consultations with parents/carers and outside agencies if required.	Greater number of parenting courses being run. Greater number of parents attending. Room used for small group with pupils such as Girls Group. Used to run an number of training courses for parents/professionals and staff.
Improvements in the provision of information to parents/carers	<p>Introduce 'ParentPay' as a more efficient method of communication with parents/carers via email and to enable parents/carers to make electronic payments for school services e.g. dinner money, school trips, uniform, after school clubs, extended after school clubs.</p> <p>Continued development of school website as an additional method of communication/reference for parents/carers and outside agencies</p>	<p>SMT/Admin Team</p> <p>JM/Admin Team</p>	<p>January 2013</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>Majority of parents/carers activating their on-line account and accessing information fully</p> <p>Parents/carers and other agencies able to access information via the website (school brochure/term dates/newsletters/uniform order forms etc</p>	<p>Parent Pay Accounts</p> <p>Parent letters sent home via email.</p>

Aim	Actions	By Whom	Start	Finish	Evidence that it is completed	Impact
Improvements in the provision of information to parents/carers continued	Introduction of Tapestry to allow parents visual access to pupil progress	Key Stage 1 initially then whole primary school		Ongoing	Use by parents.	Positive parental comments on communication with school.
Physical Improvements to increase access to small group and individual therapy for pupils	Creation of multi-sensory room	JM/Finance & Premises Committee	October 2015	July 2016	New rooms to be used for small group and individual interventions such as speech therapy, occupational therapy and sensory programmes and counselling. Designated sensory room and therapy suite will provide access to specialist equipment. Designated private space for counselling for pupils.	Pupil self-worth and willingness to engage.
To improve access to the curriculum for pupils with sensory needs.	Employment of specialist Occupational Therapist in sensory needs	JM/Staffing Committee	September 2014	Ongoing	Education Health & Care Plans which include sensory needs are being met (evidenced by pupil progress data, ISP targets and EHC reviews)	Pupils' self-regulation of sensory needs is improved.
To improve communication for non-verbal pupils	Employment of additional speech and language therapists Purchase of ipad communication applications	JM/Staffing Committee	Ongoing	Ongoing	Improved communication for non-verbal pupils' access to the curriculum (evidenced by pupil progress data, ISP targets and EHC reviews)	Increased communication skills and staff skills across the school.