


# Equality and Accessibility Policy

<b>Governor Committee Responsible:</b>		<b>Staff Lead(s):</b>	Katie Kirby
<b>Status</b> <i>(Statutory / Advisory)</i>	Non Statutory	<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annually
<b>Last Review</b>	September 2023	<b>Next Review Date</b>	September 2024
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	Daniel Gillingham Daniel Gillingham ( <a href="mailto:chair@chcfederation.gloucs.sch.uk">chair@chcfederation.gloucs.sch.uk</a> )		



This Policy has been written in conjunction with the following legislative guidance, policies and information:

- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (2018)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
- Statutory Guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014)
- School Safeguarding Policy
- Teachers Standards 2012
- Multi-Agency Guidance For Injuries In Non-Mobile Infants And Injuries Of Concern In Non-Mobile Older Children <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/safeguarding-resource-library/multi-agency-guidance-for-injuries-in-non-mobile-infants-and-injuries-of-concern-in-non-mobile-older-children/>
- Supporting Pupils at Schools with Medical Conditions (December 2015)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf) is in line with our [SEND and Safeguarding Policy](#).

## Equality and Accessibility Objectives 2022-2023

Finlay Community Primary School will utilise every best endeavour so every effort is made to ensure that **all** pupils can participate in the school's curriculum. We establish a culture that **everyone** is equally valued and treated with respect, whatever their abilities and needs.

We understand and acknowledge that the characteristics listed below are referred to as *Protected Characteristics* and are as such protected by law:

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

We understand and acknowledge that 'disability' is defined as:

**'a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.'**



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Physical or mental impairments may include:

- sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing)
- learning difficulties
- certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect

The following objectives ensure all pupils, including those with protected characteristics and/or disabilities, have equal access to all areas of school life and education:

- having high expectations of all pupils
- complimentary programme of mastery education and progressive and measurable child-specific intervention
- access to mental health and nurture therapy, including family support
- open communication with pupils, parents and carers to ensure the voices of all children with protected characteristics are heard and fully considered
- plan and provide a curriculum in which all pupils can take part in the curriculum including P.E, music and drama
- planning out-of-school activities including local trips, overnight residentials and daytrips out of county, which pupils with protected characteristics can attend and participate in
- devising teaching strategies which will remove all barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities (i.e.: visual impairment resources, dyslexia overlays, non-gender specific grouping)
- applying admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities
- planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities
- raising awareness of children with protected characteristics amongst school staff (teaching and nonteaching) through a programme of external and internal training
- by providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly
- devising teaching strategies which remove barriers to learning and increase participation for pupils with disabilities
- by examining our reading resources to ensure that there are examples of positive images of disabled people
- by utilising technology, resources and products recommended to us by health professionals

We recognise the three main elements of the **public sector equality duty (PSED)** under the Equality Act 2010:

1. Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.



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Schools are subject to the need to have due regard to the three elements outlined above. What having “due regard” means in practice has been defined in case law and means giving relevant and proportionate consideration to the duty. For schools this means:

- Decision makers in schools must be aware of the duty to have “due regard” when making a decision or taking an action and must assess whether it may have particular implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- Schools should consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought, and they need to keep them under review on a continuing basis. The PSED has to be integrated into the carrying out of the school’s functions, and the analysis necessary to comply with the duty has to be carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind – it is not just a question of ticking boxes or following a particular process.
- Schools can’t delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else.

## **1) Eliminating discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act:**

### **Protected characteristics**

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their protected characteristics (listed on page 3).

It is also unlawful to discriminate because of a characteristic which you think a person has, even if you are mistaken.

It is unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

### **Compliance with the PSED**

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with protected characteristics are not being disadvantaged. On an annual, termly or half termly basis, senior staff and the SENDCo will monitor:

Practise within school and accessibility expectations

- Accessibility Plan
- performance management
- SEND Plans and reviews are appropriately produced and timely
- SEND Register
- Admissions and LA Consult requests
- Attainment and progress
- Attendance and Exclusions
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Governing Body representation
- Health and emotional wellbeing of pupils with SEND



### **Steps taken to prevent discrimination:**

We are proactive and reactive with regards to the prevention of discrimination, taking measures including, but not limited to, the following:

- programme of external and internal training
- supplementary staff awareness refreshers during staff meetings, including Safeguarding
- performance management
- safer recruitment process
- open communication with parents and carers when consulting about admissions
- open communication with parents and carers in advance of opportunities which may present difficulty related to the protected characteristics (i.e.: visiting a religious building, sexual education, expedition involving accessibility challenges)
- proactively requesting advice and support from outside agencies with specific skills (i.e.: Adoption Services, Young Minds Matter, Education Inclusion Service, NHS professionals)
- My Profiles completed annually to obtain pupil voice of all children
- additionally, child voice sought in advance of opportunities which may present a conflict (i.e.: visit to a religious building, guest speakers linked to PSHE topics)
- child voice gathered following experiences to gather effectiveness of equality measures, to support policy and practise improvement

## **2) Advance equality of opportunity**

### **Admission**

In line with the admissions policy, arrangements are made for the admission of children with disabilities, to ensure site, staff and educational entitlement of the child can be met. This includes ensuring the needs and outcomes outlined in the Education Health Care Plan can be achieved.

- school tour offered to the child and parents/carers to view access and accessibility measures, and to observe equality policy in practise
- meetings in various formats (telephone, in-person, TAC, TAF) held with associated professionals to ensure triangulation of need related to admission
- SENDCo will review the SEND, EHCP Plan and/or Health Care Plan to identify adaptations required to support a successful admission (i.e.: staff training, staff employment, adaptive classroom resources)
- SLT and SENDCo will coordinate and authorise appropriate adaptations to support a successful admission (i.e.: handrails)

In the event of a consult request from the local authority, the SENDCo and SLT will perform duties, including, but not limited to, the following:

- consult with parents/carers
- hold a professional discussion with previous setting to ascertain support plans in place (i.e.: class teacher, SENDCo, Key Worker, GFAPS lead teacher)



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- obtain and share information with limited and appropriate staff members, including documents such as EHCP's and Personal Support Plans
- complete assessment of need to ascertaining reasonable steps required to meet need
- consult with the LA and other professionals (i.e.: SALT, Physio, Paediatric Bladder and Bowel Care Team, Advisory Teaching Service, Educational Psychologists, Disability Team, Early Help)

### **Actions to ensure equality for pupils with disabilities:**

1. Accessibility Plan prepared in accordance with Paragraph 3 Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010
2. Individual Risk Assessments written and agreed with parents/carers
3. Consultation with NHS, LA and other professionals for advice and recommendations to support equality provision
4. Child and parent voice achieved to ensure communication and consideration with regards to equality
5. Reasonable steps identified and mitigated with action/s coordinated in a timely manner
6. **SMILE Values** are taught and **Cultural Capital** experiences are consistently provided across the school with an expectation that children with accessibility needs are included
7. Provision is reviewed within the School Development plan on an annual basis and all improvements are driven via the SDP team (SLT, SENDCo)
8. The policy and targets are known to all staff and parents/carers via the school website
9. Awareness that future pupils with disabilities may have specific accessibility requirements which present new strategies and provision to meet their specific needs.

### **Schools' duties around accessibility for disabled pupils:**

#### **1. Accessibility Plan**

Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for disabled pupils.

With regard to the planning duty for disabled pupils, three strands are identified as requirements for an accessibility strategy and accessibility plans

The school has an Accessibility Plan on our website which is implemented on an annual, termly, half-termly and/or proactive/reactive basis. The plan is for:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided or offered by the school
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled disseminating timetables for accessible areas such as the hygiene suite

Schools will also regard the need to provide adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan.



OFSTED inspections may include a school's accessibility plan as part of their review.

## **2. Reasonable Adjustments**

The reasonable adjustments duty for local authorities and schools included a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. These duties apply to disabled pupils, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Many reasonable adjustments include the use of some auxiliary aids, such as coloured layovers for dyslexic pupils, pen grips, adapted PE equipment, adapted keyboards and computer software. Some involve a change in practice rather than the provision of expensive pieces of equipment or additional staff, such as pre/ post teaching, movement breaks and chunking of work.

The reasonable adjustments duty is triggered where there is a need to avoid 'substantial disadvantage'. Substantial is defined as being anything more than minor or trivial. Whether or not a disabled pupil is at a substantial disadvantage or not will depend on the individual situation. The test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects 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

A child's ability to memorise, concentrate, learn, speak, move, make and maintain positive relationships, is central to their education. An impairment that has a long-term and substantial effect on a child's ability to do these things may amount to a disability.

Some disabled pupils also have special educational needs and may receive support via a SEND Plan or have an EHCP.

Some pupils who require reasonable adjustments, will not have special educational needs and may require adjustments to meet their disability needs' in line with the council's Medical Needs Policy (i.e.: children with a hearing impairment or requiring daily medication may have an Individual Health Care Plan without a SEND Plan).

## **Accessibility Provision**

This accessibility plan will be taken into account when decisions are made concerning all aspects of accessibility provision, including and not limited to:



- **site management** (i.e.: ramps, doorways, access to all areas of the school grounds, toileting facilities, dining provision, emergency exits, lock-down and evacuation plans)
- **access to education** (i.e.: inclusive sporting resources, access to all areas of the school grounds, classroom furniture suitability, accessibility resources to support learning)
- **off site and after school activities** (i.e.: Pre-trip Assessment Visit completed by Trip Lead, Individual Risk Assessments, equipment and resources to support access to after school clubs, additional staffing where required)
- **examinations and assessments** (i.e.: scribes, interpreters, additional time, advice from LA regarding disapplication where appropriate, examination anxiety therapy support)

### 3) Foster good relations across all characteristics

At Finlay Community Primary School, we understand that good communication is key to the success of providing appropriate care and education, and supporting wellbeing. The main focus for good communication is between, but not limited to:

- school staff and external professionals
- staff and parents/carers
- staff and pupils

#### Availability

SLT, Family Services Manager (including Learning Mentors) and the SENDCo are available on the gates and playground at the beginning and end of the school day.

The school admin team are available to answer the phone between 8am and 4:30pm. There is an answering service.

The school encourage parents to use email as their primary source of contact to protect the privacy of children and families (including at drop off and pick up).

The website advertises the school, SLT and SENDCo email addresses, and teachers share their email addresses with parents at the welcome meeting.

Staff answer emails and return phone calls at their earliest convenience, within working hours.

School requests that parents/carers are understanding that staff have work and personal commitments, meetings, training and after-school club responsibilities. They may also experience a delay as teaching staff are often unavailable while in class, and staff members who hold more than one role in school or are part-time, may also have factors which affect timescales.

#### Meetings

SLT, the Attendance Officer and the SENDCo can attend meetings with parents on the school site, subject to availability.

For meetings related to SEND, the SENDCo will coordinate meetings with parents/carers, teaching and support staff and external professionals (if necessary).

SLT may attend Safeguarding meetings in the school holidays, when possible.





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Wherever possible, meetings arranged by the school will be held at the convenience of the parent/carers, to reduce the impact of childcare and/or employment responsibilities.

The school support and recommend the services of SENDIASS, a free and impartial service for all parents. <https://sendiassglos.org>. <https://sendiassglos.org.uk/>

### **Steps taken to support and improve good relations**

1. information gathering (i.e.: meeting notes, CPOMS incident entries, pupil voice and/or pictorial representation)
2. restorative and reflective conversation between pupils of different characteristics, or the same
3. engaging with staff and parents where possible when making decisions
4. involving pastoral staff with mediation conversations between pupils, or parents and their children, when requested and/or agreed to
5. consider how each decision and policy may affect pupils with different protected characteristics, to help identify priorities
6. to balance the needs of the pupils with educational outcomes, to eliminate potential discrimination
7. to use information gathering, formative and summative assessment and evidence of need to inform the level of support required, in order to:
8. make reasonable adjustments as necessary, and
9. balance competing priorities (i.e.: needs of our community versus scheme outcomes)
10. share SEND Plan reviews with parents and amend as appropriate after taking into consideration their views and opinions
11. use data collection to measure equality and access to opportunities regularly (i.e.: SEND, Pupil Premium, Disability, Gender and non-gender specific, EAL)

*This policy is a working document for the use of all staff and is subject to approval.*