



St. Stephen's School
and Children's Centre
Learning for life

Disability Equality Policy

This policy is statutory and will be reviewed every 3 years

	Date	By	Role	Ratified	Date
Version 1	February 2010	Sheena Kelly/Andrew Beech	SENCO	Governing Body	March 2010
Version 2	January 2013	Sheena Kelly/Alex Dias	SENCO Inclusion Manager	Governing Body	March 2010
Version 3	September 2016	Sheena Kelly/Alex Dias	SENCO Inclusion Manager	Governing Body	November 2016
Version 4	October 2019	James Frecknall	AHT - Inclusion	Governing Body	November 2019
Version 5	October 2022	Esther Williams	AHT- Inclusion	Governing Body	November 2022
Version 6	September 2025	Rebekah Finlay	AHT - Inclusion and Behaviour	Governing Body	December 2025

Introduction

The Federation of St Stephen's Schools and Children's Centre is committed to fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED, Section 149). As a Rights Respecting School, our approach is also informed by Article 23 of the UNCRC:

"A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence."

This policy should be read alongside the Accessibility Plan, SEND Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Legal Framework

Our duties arise under:

- **Equality Act 2010** - eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations.
- **Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)** - requiring us to publish equality objectives and report on progress annually.
- **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** - ensuring provision for children with SEND.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)** - ensuring all policies safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR** - ensuring personal data is collected and processed lawfully.

This document outlines our responsibilities as a public education centre and includes an overview of our vision, strategic goals and values. It also sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life.

School Ethos, Vision and Values

"Every St Stephen's child blossoms into a confident, respectful, modern British citizen prepared to be an aspirational contributor in the global community."

We strive to create an environment that is inclusive, safe, and challenging, enhancing the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of every member of our community. We actively promote equality of opportunity regardless of disability, race, belief, gender, sexuality, or background.

We adopt the social model of disability, recognising that it is barriers within society that restrict opportunities, and we are committed to removing those barriers.

This policy is intended to be read in conjunction with a number of other St. Stephen's policies:

- Mid Phase Admissions Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan

This document will evolve over time as we undertake further consultation activities which will be used as targets and actions.

Definition of Disability

A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This includes:

- Long-term conditions
- Mental health conditions, without needing to be "clinically recognised," provided they are substantial and long-term.
- Pupils with SEND and medical needs who meet the statutory definition.

Duties and Commitments

We will:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors.
- Advance equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people.
- Foster positive attitudes towards disability through the curriculum and school culture.
- Encourage participation of disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers, and community members in all aspects of school life.
- Make reasonable adjustments (curriculum, physical environment, information access) to ensure full inclusion.

Training and Awareness

- Disability, equality and inclusion are embedded in the Safeguarding and SEND CPD cycles.
- Key staff receive refresher training on a rolling 2-year programme.
- All staff receive equality and disability awareness training as part of induction and ongoing CPD.
- Governors receive training to enable them to monitor compliance with the Equality Act and PSED.

Consultation and Involvement

We actively involve disabled people in shaping provision by:

- Consulting pupils and parents through reviews, surveys, and school council.
- Maintaining registers of disabled pupils, staff, and parents/carers to inform planning.
- Meeting with disabled staff and parents to identify barriers and solutions.
- Engaging disabled members of the community and local schools in activities, visits, and consultation.
- Ensuring the **SEN Link Governor** plays an active role in monitoring provision.

We ensure pupils with disabilities are fully included in:

- School trips and residentials (with appropriate adjustments and risk assessments).
- Performances, sports, extracurricular activities, and leadership opportunities.
- Curriculum adaptations, including use of assistive technology, specialist equipment, and differentiated teaching strategies.

Monitoring and Reporting

We will:

- Collect and analyse data on disabled pupils' progress, attendance, exclusions, and participation.
- Monitor the recruitment, retention, and professional development of disabled staff.
- Review policies regularly for impact on disability equality.
- Publish Equality Objectives on the school website and report annually on progress.
- Ensure governors receive termly updates on disability equality and accessibility.
Involve disabled people in evaluating impact and shaping future objectives.

Data Protection

All information about disability will be collected and processed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Data will only be used for the purposes of monitoring, planning, and improving provision.

Our Action Plan

We have produced a disability equality action plan for progress, at the end of the document, to ensure that we fulfil our general and specific duties under the Disability Equality Duty. Our existing accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to improve:

- Curriculum access
- Provision of information to disabled pupils
- Physical access

Our Accessibility Plan will be maintained as a separate document and we will ensure that the actions in the plan fit in with the actions and arrangements in our Disability Equality Policy.

Reporting

We will report annually about the progress we make on promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people. Our annual report will include details of:

- Information we have gathered during the year
- How this information was used
- Action points completed during the year and those that are ongoing
- We will ensure that disabled people are involved in this process.

Revisiting the Policy and Measuring Impact

We will measure impact of the policy in the following ways throughout each year:

- Continue to collect and reflect upon data obtained from disabled members of the school and wider community
- Monitor progress of achievement of disabled pupils
- Review the curriculum with key co-ordinators
- Review policies regularly in view of disability equality duty
- Continue to update Governors on progress relating to access and duty
- Continue to liaise with local schools on good practice and successes

Our scheme will be reviewed and revised each year and disabled people will be involved in the process. A new action plan will be produced, responding to issues identified through our impact assessment and included in our annual reports.

Plan for Progress

Target	Action
Involvement of people with disabilities in developing the scheme.	Consult regularly with children with disabilities, staff and service users in the ongoing development of the Disability Equality Scheme by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating support plans for all SEND pupils and holding annual reviews for pupils in receipt of Higher Needs Funding • Analysis of available school disability data • Organisation's reports which examined the experiences of children with disabilities • Meeting with parents at consultation events/parents evenings and individual meetings using our open door policy • Consultations with external agencies surrounding pupils with specific physical disabilities including hearing and visual impairments.
Maintain a voice for children, staff and parents/carers with disabilities.	Assess ongoing opportunities for children with disabilities, staff and parents/carers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including children and parents/carers in review meetings • Including children and parents/carers in school questionnaires • Creating and adapting specific PSHE topics to suit current needs of the community • Use of the Student Council • Having a cycle of agenda items at Governing Body meetings to discuss issues • Share any children and parent/carer queries or concerns with the leadership team and agree follow up actions and responses immediately
Encourage participation	Ensure that children with disabilities are represented and encouraged to participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performances • Sports activities • School council • Junior Leadership Team discussions • Trips, visits and experiences Children with disabilities should be included fully in school life.
Eliminate harassment and bullying	We have a robust Anti-Bullying Policy.
Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities	Promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring displays and resources reflect diversity • The curriculum positively promoting difference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers taking into account Support Plans when planning lessons • Use of outside agencies to support staff training • Using newsletters and web pages to promote policies.
Remove barriers to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not excluding children with disabilities from school trips. Additional staff are allocated to accompany those children with specific needs. Wheelchair access bus/coach transport is used if required. Risk assessments are carried out for chosen trip locations. • Having appropriate seating and desk support available to provide necessary back support where required. • Operating a Teaching and Learning Policy that requires all lessons to be differentiated to accommodate the capabilities and disabilities of children. Teachers are provided with information specific to individual children. • Ensuring children with disabilities have access to extracurricular activities. • Teachers adapting, where possible, resources and techniques to suit a wide range of learners. • All children having equal access to resources. Provision is made for all abilities and specialised resources are available for SEND children. • Specific large equipment to support key children (fire chair, medical bed, walking frames and structured seating). • Training in using specific equipment by specialist external partners in the borough for key staff working with children with physical disabilities. • Yearly servicing of specific large equipment by manufacturers. • Having strong links with external partners e.g. Advisers, Behaviour Support Service, Social Service, Health Service, Speech and Language therapists, Specialist teachers. • Reviewing practice as and when required, ensuring a thorough admission process is undertaken highlighting any changes required before a pupil starts with us. • Using external advisers to support 'support plan' meetings where appropriate. • Using external advisers to assist with planning of the PSHE programme where appropriate. • Regular Inclusion staff INSET outlining expectations. • Ensuring the Accessibility Plan is reviewed annually.
Measure Impact	<p>We measure the impact of our Disability Equality Scheme by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring internal assessment and progress • Using existing procedures for reviewing the impact of provision for children with disabilities e.g. Learning Plans/Annual Reviews, Year Reviews • External validation e.g. Parent/community surveys
Governors	<p>Governors meetings will be held in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities when the need arises. Parents and children are made aware of how the Governing Body contributes to the life of the school through the school website and newsletters. The School and Governors consult with parents/carers through questionnaires.</p>
Disability Data	<p>We follow GDPR Guidelines and only collect and use the data that is required for monitoring and reviewing purposes.</p>
Reviewing	<p>This action plan is reviewed annually.</p>