



COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caring, Proud, Successful!

Accessibility Policy

Mission Statement

We believe that Cobham Primary School is a place to be happy and safe, where all children are valued, nurtured and acknowledged as individuals; growing together within the school and the community. This environment supports and challenges all children to reach their potential; to move on as confident, caring participants and members of society.

Aims of the School

In partnership with Parents and Governors we aim to:

- Develop a life-long love of learning, through a culture of excellence and enjoyment.
- Equip all children with the skills to become active, independent learners.
- To encourage pupils to persist and persevere with new challenges.
- To ensure pupils develop an awareness and understanding and respect of other cultures, faiths and beliefs and apply these to school and the community.
- To foster and encourage a moral and spiritual set of values, including respect, honesty, tolerance and forgiveness.
- To instil the knowledge that aspirations can be met through determination, hard work and self-belief.

In order to achieve these aims we provide:

- positive role models
- a calm, well-ordered, stable working environment in which
- children feel encouraged to try, confident in the knowledge that
- mistakes are part of the learning process.

The definition of disability is

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

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on pupils’ everyday lives.

We recognise:

- our duty under the Disability Discrimination Act ('95) as amended by the SENDA (2001)

“from September 2002, it will be unlawful for schools and LEAs to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, education and associated services.”¹

Schools and LEAs must:

- not treat disabled pupils less favourably; and
- take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the ‘reasonable adjustment’ duty)
- that Local Education Authority and school governors have the duty to publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans

¹ Preparation for entry to the school, the curriculum, teaching and learning, classroom organisation, timetabling, grouping of pupils, homework, access to school facilities, activities to supplement the curriculum, school sports, school policies, breaks and lunchtimes, the serving of school meals, interaction with peers, assessment and exam arrangements, school discipline and sanctions, school clubs and activities, school trips, the school arrangements for working with other agencies, preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

Scope of the Plan

This plan covers all three main strands of the planning duty:

1. Improving the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services.

This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor coverings, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnetic doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities, adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops and way-finding systems.

Physical aids to access education cover things such as ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept key boards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for children with motor coordination and poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils

In maintained schools the provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will be made through the SEN framework and to a lesser extent through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEN route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEN duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school. For example, a pupil with visual impairment might have low vision aids provided through the statement of SEN but the school might as a general measure provide blinds and adjustable lighting through the planning duty.

2. Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculums.

This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options and staff information and training. Schools will be expected to plan to improve progressively access to the curriculum for all disabled pupils although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEN framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual pupils.

3. Improving the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities

This part of the duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing to its pupils – such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events – available to disabled pupils. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audio tape and large print and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information should also be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

Other related school policies

Equality for disabled pupils is included as an explicit aim in all of the school's policies and is supported by the school's other policies including:

- Teaching and Learning
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions policy/criteria
- School improvement plan
- School Asset Management Plan
- Policy for school trips and excursions
- SEN policy
- Exclusions

Aims

Cobham Primary School aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this will include:

- having high expectations of all pupils
- finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music, and drama
- planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that pupils with disabilities can participate
- setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly
- devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities
- planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities
- raising awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training
- by providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly.

- by using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.
- by examining our library and reading books to ensure that there are examples of positive images of disabled people

Actions to ensure equality for pupils with disabilities

1. We shall undertake a disability audit.

2. As a result of the audit, we shall:

- write an action plan which includes targets
- make the policy and targets known to all teaching and ancillary staff, pupils and parents
- monitor the success of the plan
- the Plan will be reviewed annually by the governing body
- The PASH committee will monitor and further develop good practice.

Monitoring

Cobham Primary School recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

We will monitor

- Admissions
- Attainment
- Attendance
- Exclusions
- Response to teaching styles/subject
- SEN Register
- Effects of the Literacy & Numeracy Strategies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Homework
- Selection & recruitment of staff
- Governing body representation
- Parents attending consultation meetings
- Parents' involvement in the life of the school (representation on PTA, attendance at parents' evenings, in the classroom, school productions, sports day, fetes etc)

Publications for Guidance

Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils

Issued to all schools in June 2002

(DfES Publications)

Schools Disability Code of Practice

Disability Rights Commission (DRC)

SEN Code of Practice

DfES Guidance on Inclusive Schooling

National Curriculum 2000 Inclusion Statement

DfEE: Access for disabled people to school buildings (BB91)

The Stationary Office

Useful telephone numbers:

Disability Rights Commission 0207 828 7022

DRC Helpline 0845 622 633

DfES Publications 0845 60 222 60

Ofsted Publications 020 7510 0180

QCA 021 8867 3333