



The Blue Coat School

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Approved by the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee

Signed: _____

(K Gilmore – Chair of Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee)

Date: _____

Date of Next Review: Lent 2026

This Disability Discrimination Policy was devised by the Bursar and the Director of Learning Success in consultation with colleagues in the School.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1

The School Vision is 'Limitless learning for tomorrow's achievers' which is supported by its Mission and Aims which state the School aims to:

- Nurture a spirit of fun, adventure and curiosity in a supportive and caring Christian community;
- Provide exceptional learning opportunities for every child through innovative and dynamic teaching; and
- Champion versatile, creative risk-takers prepared for a changing world.

1.2

This Policy specifies the manner in which staff aim to fulfil this vision and the mission and aims by promoting and valuing the individuality of all of the children. Staff are committed to giving every child the opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. The children are offered a broad and balanced curriculum, and staff have high expectations of all pupils: their achievements, attitudes and well-being matter.

1.3

The Blue Coat School Disability Discrimination Policy applies to all children in the School including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception). This Policy is available for parents on the school website and in Main Reception and the Pre-Prep Office.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1

The Blue Coat School Disability Discrimination Policy has regard to the requirements of Equality Act 2010 (and subsequent revisions), the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015) and the current Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since 2002, it has been unlawful for schools and Local Education Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services.

2.2

From 1st October 2004, it became unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises. Along with all other public buildings, The Blue Coat School is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1

The Equality Act (2010) defines disability as 'A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities'.

3.2

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years states that: 'A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for other of the same age in mainstream schools.'

3.3

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.

3.4

Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

3.5

'Reasonable adjustments' does not include a duty to change physical features but, from 1 September 2012, it does include a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services 'where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, [a duty] to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid'.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1

The Blue Coat School aims to be an inclusive school. Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum and can impede the delivery of information. Staff actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all of the children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities.

4.2

Staff aim to ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education provided by The Blue Coat School. A pupil with a disability is not treated less favourably than others because of the nature of his/her disability. All reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage. The needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities are anticipated wherever possible before s/he joins the School.

5. ADMISSIONS

5.1

The Blue Coat School is an academically selective school at age 7. The selection process is designed to identify pupils who will be able to benefit from a balanced and well-rounded education and to make a positive contribution towards the life of the School. Applications are encouraged from as diverse a range of backgrounds as possible. This enriches the community and is vital in preparing pupils for their life ahead. Further details about the academic requirements for admission are set out in the Admissions Policy and Procedures.

5.2

Pupils with special educational needs are welcomed, provided that the Learning Success Department can offer them the support that they require. Pupils with physical disabilities are welcomed, provided that the site can accommodate them. Parents of a child who has any disability or special educational needs should therefore provide the School with full written details when applying for a place, or subsequently before accepting the offer of a place. The School needs this information so that, in the case of a child with particular needs, those needs can be assessed and parents can be consulted about the adjustments that can reasonably be made to cater adequately for the child's needs both during the admissions process and if an offer of a place is made.

5.3

Similarly, if special educational needs or a disability become apparent after an offer of a place has been accepted or after a child has started at the School, the School will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that may allow their child to continue at the School.

6. ACCESSIBILITY

6.1 Accessibility Plan

6.1.1

The School makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and members of staff and members of the public are not disadvantaged.

6.1.2

The Accessibility Plan (with timescales) enables the School to fulfil its legal requirements and remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities. The Plan is reviewed as appropriate and a new Plan is devised every year. This Plan details the measures The Blue Coat School has already taken, and is still taking, to:

- Improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of the education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School
- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils (including those with special educational needs) can participate in the School's curriculum
- Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

6.2 Physical Accessibility

6.2.1

The Blue Coat School will endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils, parents and staff by developing the physical environment of the School, within the limits of the resources available and the constraints imposed by the nature of the buildings and the campus, as detailed in the Accessibility Plan.

6.3 The Curriculum

6.3.1

Teaching strategies are used to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. Out-of-school activities and school trips are planned in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

6.3.2

Staff use language that does not offend, and staff and pupils are made aware of the importance of language. The library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.

6.3.3

The School regularly reviews the way in which resources are matched to the needs of all the children. In order to improve the provision, adjustments will be made when necessary, within the bounds of the resources, to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.

6.3.4

Many of the adjustments made are dependent upon individual needs, and staff continue to move towards more individualised approaches. Staff seek and respond to guidance from the parents and the children.

6.4 Communication

6.4.1

Ways of improving the delivery of information are determined after taking account of the pupils' disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents.

6.4.2

If it was required, information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) could be made available in alternative formats where possible.

6.4.3

Account is always taken of disabilities, be they the pupils' or their parents'. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

7. STAFFING

7.1

When advertising posts, interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the Governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures, and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

7.2

Should a member of staff become disabled, the Governing Body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.

7.3

All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 The Role of the Governing Body

8.1.1

The Governing Body is responsible for the School's duty not to discriminate. The Governing Body has a named Governor, Mrs Anita Poole, with responsibility for matters of disability discrimination.

8.1.2

The named Governor has responsibility, with the assistance of The Director of Learning Success, SENCO, Headmaster and Bursar, to keep the Governing Body informed of any new regulations, and to ensure that the School regularly reviews its processes and procedures.

8.2.1 The Role of the Headmaster

8.2.1

It is the Headmaster's role to implement the School's Disability Discrimination Policy. The Headmaster will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.

8.3 The Role of The Director of Learning Success and SENCO

8.3.1

The Director of Learning Success and SENCO liaise with the named Governor to ensure that the School meets its obligation not to discriminate in respect of education.

8.3.2

The Director of Learning Success and SENCO are responsible for co-ordinating the School's liaison with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, educational psychologists, doctors, the School Matron, social workers and the Early Years Area SENCO team. The cost of support from external agencies usually has to be met by the child's parents.

8.4 The Role of Staff

8.4.1

All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents or staff with disabilities. Parents are asked to keep the School informed about any relevant issues, so that staff can work towards resolving them.

9. RELATED POLICIES

9.1

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities Policy and the Policy for Special Educational Needs and Disability.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

10.1

This Policy will be reviewed, approved and monitored by the Governors' Safeguarding, Health and Safety Committee and then the full Governing Body. It will be reviewed every year, or before if necessary.