

Oasis Academy Sholing Disability Equality Scheme

Policy Statement for Disability Equality Scheme incorporating School Accessibility Plan 2019

- 1.1 At Oasis Academy Sholing we aim to provide a safe, secure and caring environment in which every child is able to learn confidently and happily in order to fulfil his/her potential. Oasis Academy Sholing aims to fully include all members of its school community.

“Equal and high learning opportunities for all in a stimulating environment.”

The purpose of this policy statement is to outline the requirements of the Disability Equality duty detailed in the Equality Act 2010.

This policy also has due regard for the Southampton City Council policy statement on Disability Equality and to Children’s Services Directorate accessibility strategy.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone with 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.

For the purposes of the act, physical impairments, mental impairments, substantial adverse impact and long-term impact are defined as follows:

- **Physical impairments** – are impairments affecting the senses (sight, hearing etc), a weakening of part of the body through illness, by accident or congenitally (such as paralysis of a leg or heart disease).
- **Mental impairment** – includes but is not limited to, an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness only if the illness is a clinically well- recognised illness.
- **Substantial adverse effect** – means that the effect of the physical or mental impairment to carry out normal day to day activities must be more than minor or trivial. It does not have to be a severe effect. The person must be affected in at least one of the respects listed in the DDA – mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand, or perception of risk or physical danger.
- **Long term effects** - are defined as having lasted, or be likely to last, for at least 12 months, or for the rest of the lifetime of the person affected. A person with a life expectancy of less than 12 months would be covered if the effect is likely to last until that person dies.

Oasis Academy Sholing’s working understanding of disability is based on the “social model” of disability: i.e. that people are disabled by negative attitudes and assumptions and by physical and social barriers rather than by their impairments or medical conditions. The achievement of equality of opportunity for disabled people therefore requires us to change the attitudes, policies, practices and actions that create such barriers.

The Social Model approach to disability was developed by disabled people and makes the distinction between disability and impairment as follows:

Impairment is an injury, illness or congenital condition that causes or is likely to cause, loss or difference in the way the mind or body works.

Disability is defined as the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in society on an equal level with others, due to barriers in society or the environment.

Under the social model, the barriers facing disabled people can be:

- Attitudes – e.g. a public office had been modified so that the door opened at the press of a button, but the electrics had been switched off as the building was to be closed in one hour.
- Environment - e.g. the absence of accessible information or buildings.
- Communications and Information – e.g. access being restricted due the alternative formats not being provided.
- Organisations' and Institutions' rules and policies – e.g. methods of recruitment advertising.

2.1 This policy reflects the importance Oasis Academy Sholing puts on the inclusion of all disabled members of the school community. The basic requirement for school when carrying out their functions is to have due regard to do the following:

1. Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and non-disabled people.
2. Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act.
3. Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their impairment.
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
5. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
6. Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

2.2 OASIS ACADEMY SHOLING will involve pupils, staff and parents in the delivery of this policy:

- On entry, all staff, governors, volunteers, parents/carers and relevant family members involved in the school community will be invited to complete a survey regarding their needs and their children's needs. As a result of any disclosure of disability, consultations are completed with individuals and reasonable adjustments are made and monitored to successfully promote inclusion.
- Pupils are consulted individually according to their needs. A school council promotes the needs of all pupils and provides a forum for representation.

2.3a Oasis Academy Sholing follows Oasis Community Learning's Education policies on recruitment of all staff. All members of the community are invited to discuss their needs.

- A data base on appropriate adjustments for staff and volunteers is maintained in response to any disclosure of needs.
- All staff and volunteers with a disability will be asked to complete an exit survey on whether or not the school has met their needs.

2.3b The school's main priorities are to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in all of the school's activities and to ensure appropriate audits of the curriculum, buildings and out of school activities are completed. The aim is to provide services where there is evidence they make a difference and give value for money, in that they:

- Increase access to the curriculum through the development of staff expertise, ensuring specialist support is accessed where available.
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and extended services, using the annual asset management meeting to identify key areas of improvement where needed.
- Improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing ensuring a range of different formats and communication aids are used where necessary ensuring all information is accessible to everyone in our school community.
- To respond to the needs of the community according to information disclosed through the survey, observations and dialogues.

Support will be sought from local agencies, voluntary agencies and charities as necessary.

The education opportunities available to, and the achievements of, disabled pupils are reviewed regularly and adjustments regularly made in response to an individual's needs. Individual adjustments may be evidenced by Student Information Profiles (SIPs) which include both behaviour and education in line with SEN guidance, Individual Care Plans and/or Risk Assessments. Oasis Academy Sholing liaises regularly with parents, specialist teacher advisers, outside agencies and special schools to ensure optimum integration through reasonable adjustments.

The achievements of disabled pupils are monitored on at least a termly basis in terms of educational progress and the participation of the disabled pupil in all aspects of school life.

2.4 The impact of Oasis Academy Sholing's current policies and practices on disability equality will be assessed by:

- Quantitative data on the achievements of disabled pupils.
- Retention of staff and volunteers.
- Consultations with pupils, parents/carers, volunteers and staff.

At Oasis Academy Sholing all staff have a duty to work to this policy to ensure even greater inclusion of pupils with disabilities. Information collected will be coordinated by Daryl Misselbrook, SENDCo, and brought to the Principal, Martin Brown, plus the Governing Body prior to being incorporated in the School Improvement Plan. Action Plans will be developed and monitored through the annual school improvement process.

All information contained in the School Improvement Plan is available to the school community on request. Please ask at Reception.

This policy will be reviewed in 2017 by the Disability Equality Scheme Working Party of the time.

The effectiveness of the scheme and action plan will be evaluated according to the success criteria stated. Subsequent action plans and schemes will be further informed by surveys and successes.