

**Disability Policy (Whole School including EYFS)**  
**Independent Day School for Boys and Girls**

**Our Lady of Sion School**

Last Reviewed: 11/11/2020

Frequency of Review: 2 Years

Next Review: November 2022

## 1 Aims of this policy

1.1 The aims of this policy are:

- to afford opportunity to employees and pupils who are disabled;
- to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (**SENDA**);
- to have regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission "*What equality law means for you as an education provider: Schools*".

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/what-equality-law-means-you-education-provider-schools>

1.2 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

## 2 Policy statement

2.1 Our Lady of Sion School (the **School**) will:

- maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the School;
- train staff (when the need arises) to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with employees and pupils who are disabled. Staff will not be expected, unless medically qualified or trained, to administer medication;
- adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of disabled children, and consult with those parents about the reasonable adjustments which can be made to ensure that the admissions process is accessible for their children;
- implement and review the Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the School's curriculum, improving the physical environment of the School and improving access to information for our employees, pupils and prospective pupils and their parents;
- keep under review the School's Admission Policy, Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying policies.

## 3 Disability

3.1 A person has a disability if he or she has 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 activity (**Equality Act 2010**).

3.2 By way of further explanation:

- 3.2.1 physical disability includes medical conditions for which a person needs to use a wheelchair, for example, cerebral palsy or brittle bones;
- 3.2.2 a mental impairment is a recognised mental illness which has been diagnosed, a severe learning difficulty or a psychiatric illness;
- 3.2.3 "long-term" means a period of 12 months or longer.

3.3 Other disabilities which may amount to disability include:

- severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks (but not including tattoos or piercings);
- progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity;
- a controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a prosthesis, or a person with drug-controlled epilepsy or diabetes;
- a history of impairment, for example a person who used to be disabled and has recovered, for example, a person with a previous mental illness.

#### 3.4 Disability does not include:

- hay fever sufferers;
- a person with anti-social tendencies;
- a person who has a behavioural difficulty, for a reason other than a disability, for example, arising from social or domestic circumstances;
- a person who is addicted to nicotine, alcohol and other non-prescribed substances unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment.

## 4 Discrimination

#### 4.1 We will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures;
- in the terms on which a place at the School is offered;
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment;
- in the provision of education and associated services;
- in the way the School affords access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the School;
- by excluding a person on the grounds of his or her disability;
- by harassing a person with a disability;
- by victimising a person with a disability;
- by failing to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled persons.

## 5 Admission procedure for pupils

5.1 The School will be open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and / or mental impairment.

5.2 Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the child's ability and aptitude.

- 5.3 The registration or admission form will enable the parents to give details of their child's disability.
- 5.4 The School will treat every application from a disabled child in a fair, open-minded way.
- 5.5 The School will, if appropriate, request from the parents or previous School full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the child's disability so that the School can make an assessment of the reasonable adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs.
- 5.6 Applications will be considered on the basis that all **Reasonable Adjustments** have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's disability (see definition below).
- 5.7 The School will not offer a place if, after all Reasonable Adjustments have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately or appropriately for the child's physical and educational needs.
- 5.8 The School will inform the parents of their decision and give details of the Reasonable Adjustments they are prepared to make or give reasons why the offer of a place will not be made.

## **6 Education and associated services**

- 6.1 The School has an ongoing duty to make Reasonable Adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided by the School. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of School life. The range of activities that are covered by the expression include:
- the curriculum;
  - classroom organisation and timetabling;
  - access to School facilities;
  - School sports;
  - School policies;
  - breaks and lunchtimes;
  - School assessment and examination arrangements;
  - School discipline and sanctions;
  - exclusion procedures;
  - School clubs, educational visits and other activities;
  - preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

## **7 Reasonable Adjustments for pupils**

- 7.1 When providing educational services to a pupil, the School is legally required to make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to cater for a pupil's disability.
- 7.2 The School shall inform the pupil and parents of the Reasonable Adjustments that the School are legally required to make for that pupil, which may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
- providing examination papers in larger print for a pupil with a visual impairment;
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building;
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

7.3 The School is not legally required to make adjustments which include physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, such as a new library.

The Equality Act 2010 requires all Schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". The School will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided. There may be additional costs incurred to parents as a result of these adjustments.

## Reasonable Adjustments for the public

7.4 The School may provide services to the public, for example at:

- open days;
- parents' evenings;
- concerts and plays;
- exhibitions;
- conferences;
- use of sports facilities.

7.5 Where a physical feature (for example steps, entrances, exits, toilet facilities) makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to access the service, Schools are required to take reasonable steps to:

- remove the feature; or
- alter it so it no longer has that effect; or
- provide reasonable means of avoiding the feature; or
- provide a reasonable alternative method of making the service available

7.6 Where an **Auxiliary Aid or Service** would enable a disabled person to make use of a service, Schools are required to take reasonable steps to provide it. An Auxiliary Aid or Service could be something as simple as extra assistance from a member of staff or a large print sign, or it might be a temporary ramp where steps are preventing wheelchair access.

## 8 Disclosure

8.1 Parents will be requested to provide the School with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding the pupil's disability.

- 8.2 If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the School has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's disability and the School is not able to make Reasonable Adjustments for those disabilities, then the School may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.
- 8.3 The School will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of a person's disability as confidential.

## **9 Review procedure**

- 9.1 Parents may request a review if the School decides it is unable to offer their child a place on the grounds of disability. The request must be made as soon as possible and in any event within seven days of the decision being notified to the parents. The Headmaster will advise as to the procedure under which such a review will be conducted.

## **10 Accessibility plans**

- 10.1 The School has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff.
- 10.2 The Accessibility Plan includes consideration of how the School proposes to:
- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum
  - improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School

The Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that the Plan is up-to-date and covers all aspects of School life.

**Authorised by Chair of Governors**

**Date November 2020**