

Our Lady's Catholic College **Disability Equality Scheme**

Introduction

Our Lady's Catholic College is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, students, parents/guardians, governors and stakeholders within the School community that have any form of disability and we will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

The School is committed to involving and providing disabled people every opportunity to comment on how our School can improve the support it offers to disabled students, staff, parents and the wider community.

DES Mission Statement

As a community of Our Lady's Catholic College, it is our ambition that all pupils have access to learning that allows them to reach their full potential. Therefore the pupils, parents, staff and governors will strive to ensure that regardless of an individual pupil's needs, they will be encouraged to access the whole school life at OLCC in a warm and encouraging way.

This scheme should be read in conjunction with our accessibility plan, SEN policy, race, and gender equality policies.

Reasonable Adjustments

The DDA requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils and users of the school are not put at a substantial disadvantage and are able to access the same opportunities as non - disabled peers. Specifically, the school intends that disabled pupils and users will have the same access to the curriculum, to information and access to the school environment and facilities as non – disabled pupils and users. In planning developments to deliver this intention the school considers the needs of current and future pupils and users of the school. The main strategies to bring about reasonable adjustments in the next three years are described in the Accessibility Plan; however reasonable adjustments are made on an individual basis according to need, by working collaboratively with disabled persons and/or their parents.

The school will be successful in making reasonable adjustments when disabled persons can, wherever possible, participate fully:

- In the classroom

- In the school curriculum
- At all times and in all parts of the building

And when

- Disabled persons feel part of the life of the school
- Disabled persons are included by their peers in all parts of school life
- Parents of disabled students feel their child is part of the life of the school
- Staff feel confident in working with disabled pupils

Legal requirements/role of Governing Body

Under Part 5A of the DDA governing bodies are required to:

- **promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and**
- **prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.**

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body of OLCC will promote equality of opportunity for young people and adults.

In addition, duties in Part 4 of the DDA require the governing body to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

- **increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;**
- **improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;**
- **improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.**

These are the core areas covered by our **Accessibility Plan** which outlines how the Governing Body intends to further increase access to education for disabled pupils which is incorporated in this scheme.

What do we understand by “disability”?

At OLCC we promote disability equality and prepare all our young people for life in a diverse society. We use the term ‘disabled’ to refer to someone who 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 activities.

We do not interchange **the term disabled** with the phrase **special educational needs** although we appreciate that many pupils with SEN will also have disabilities.

We use the DDA definition of **impairment to include hidden impairments** such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as well as:

- *'physical impairment'* which includes sensory impairment;
- *'mental impairment'* which includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness.

We believe that an impairment does not of itself mean that a pupil is disabled. It is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered.

In relation to normal day-to-day activity the test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one or more of the following:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger

The core value of OLCC in relation to disability is to actively seek to:

- **Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons**
- **Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act**
- **Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities**
- **Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons –This means not representing people in a demeaning way, and it also means not pretending they don't exist and not representing them at all.**
- **Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life - It is also important to respect the wishes of disabled children in an educational setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in.**

- **Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.**

(DDA 2005 S.49A)

Involving disabled students, staff and parents – in our school and the community

The School is committed to ensuring an environment where everyone has opportunities. It is important that we consider everyone in our school and community, improving support through various methods to create a deeper understanding.

The provision and information gathered:

- A curriculum that continues to be assessed and updated to ensure inclusion for all. – *constantly updated*
- A site where staff, pupils, parents, governors and visitors can access and use facilities. – *constantly updated*
- SEN workshop meeting where representatives of each department join the SEN department for updates, listen to speakers, school improvement. - *every term, ongoing*
- Letter sent to parents of pupils who have statements from year 7-9 to gain feedback. – *June 2009*
- The creation of a DES council formed by pupils with varied disabilities under the DDA. This council discusses what barriers are faced and what steps are necessary to remove them. *November 2009*
- The link between the DES council and the student council to bring a voice, setting out objectives and the actions needed to be achieved. – *January 2010*
- The continued link with our wider community – prompting awareness and friendship between pupils of OLCC and The Loyne through varied activities and visits. – *ongoing*
- To use the Disability Act and DES in planning school trips. - *ongoing*
- Disabled staff are consulted so that any specific issues surrounding disabilities, support and personal development can be considered. – *ongoing for changes in need and staff*
- Using newsletter, services and assemblies to promote awareness of the DDA acts and how it affects our community.

- Use of questionnaires to enable us to determine where action is necessary.
- Raising awareness of the DES via the ECM governors committee. – *March 2010*
- Attendance on SEN implementing DES policy course. – *April 2010*

Meeting the six duties

OLCC aims to meet the requirements of the 6 duties through:

Promoting equality of opportunity

- by awareness raising and staff training
- by ensuring all policies reflect the school's commitment to equal opportunities for the disabled
- by keeping a watchful eye on the impact of policies
- reviewing and adjusting policies
- raising expectations
- Improving communication
- Increasing awareness of the ways in which parents of disabled children and young people can help to support their learning, for example through workshops
- Ensuring that the talents of disabled pupils are represented accordingly through the Gifted and Talented Registers

Eliminating discrimination

The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all children, employees and users of school services and all school policies and procedures are based on this commitment.

Eliminating bullying and harassment

The school has adopted LA policies on harassment at work.

The school's Anti Bullying Policy is regularly monitored and reviewed by a team of staff, parents, Governors and students. The latest policy May 2009 + is available from the school's web site or directly from the Head Teacher.

- raising awareness amongst staff and pupils of disability-related harassment
- understanding the nature and prevalence of bullying and harassment

- recognising and addressing bullying and harassment
- involving pupils themselves in combating bullying
- reviewing school anti –bullying policy and procedures
- ensuring that disability-related harassment of disabled staff, parents, carers and other users of the school is identified and addressed
- the use of SEAL materials
- If a number of incidents have been prevalent within a particular year group, use circle time, story time or assembly to investigate and address the issue with all pupils

Promoting positive attitudes

- by staff modelling respectful attitudes to disabled pupils, staff and parents
- by challenging negativity
- by ensuring representation of disabled people in senior positions in the school
- through the curriculum – SEAL/PSHE/RE
- through positive images in school books and other materials
- ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials
- celebrate and highlight key events such as the Paralympics, Deaf Awareness Week and Learning Disability Week
- Inviting disabled members of the community/organisations to talk to children

Encouraging participation in public life

- Where possible, disabled pupils, staff and parents are represented in senior, responsible and representative roles
- There are positive images of disabled people participating
- Ensure that disabled pupils are represented and encouraged to participate in class assemblies, plays, events and on the school council

Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

- Additional coaching or training for disabled pupils, staff or parents
- Special facilities for disabled pupils at breaks and lunchtimes
- A policy of interviewing all disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements for a job

Making things happen

Action plans

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, OLCC have action plans which outline how the requirements of the DDA 2005 will be met. This action plan has been written in consultation with community involvement outlined above.

Please see attached documents

Monitoring and reporting

The action plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Governing body in consultation with stakeholders. The views of those pupils (and their parents) affected by the policy will be sought during IEP reviews and via other means if the pupil is not statemented. The school will use the information gathered to up date and amend the policy, setting new targets in the accessibility strategy to further the aims of the school in this area.

At the end of the three year cycle the Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed and a new scheme agreed and implemented. This may affect other policies within the school, which will be amended if required.

Signature of Chair of Governors:

Date:

Signature of Head teacher:

Date:

Date of next review:
