



## St Nicolas CE Primary School ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

STAFF SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Spoon".

GOVERNOR SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "K. O'Connell".

DATE ADOPTED: July 2025 (FGB)

DATE FOR REVIEW: July 2028 (FGB)

Additional notes:

Cross reference with the following policy/ies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Curriculum/Teaching and Learning
- Assessment
- Admissions
- Equality Policy
- Behaviour
- SEND
- PSHE & Citizenship
- Health and Safety (including Risk Assessment)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

## 1. Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty build on previous legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act and sets out three key duties for schools to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled students:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- To publish and implement accessibility strategy to increase access to school education for disabled pupils.

From September 2012 the reasonable adjustments duty for local authorities and schools included a duty to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils. Many reasonable adjustments are inexpensive and will often involve a change in practice rather than the provision of expensive pieces of equipment or additional staff. The reasonable adjustments duty is triggered only where there is a need to avoid 'substantial disadvantage'. 'Substantial' is defined as being anything more than minor or trivial. Whether or not a disabled pupil is at a substantial disadvantage or not will depend on the individual situation

It is unlawful for a school to charge a child for making reasonable adjustments in any circumstances, whatever the financial cost to the school and however the school is funded.

## 2. Definition

The Equality Act 2010 defines pupils as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing. More guidance on the definition of disability is available from <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as a mental health need, dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or people diagnosed with cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis. An impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled. It is the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered.

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; or
- Perception of risk of physical danger.

A child's ability to memorise, concentrate, learn, speak, move, make and maintain positive relationships is central to their education. An impairment that has a long-term and substantial effect on a child's ability to do these things may amount to a disability.

Some disabled pupils also have special educational needs or disability (SEND) and may be receiving support via school-based SEND Support provision or have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Just because a disabled pupil has SEND or has an EHC plan does not take away the duty to make reasonable adjustments for them. In practice, of course, many disabled pupils who also have a statement of SEND/EHC plan will receive all the support they need through the SEND framework and there will be nothing extra the school has to do.

However, some disabled pupils will not have SEND, and some disabled pupils with SEND will still need reasonable adjustments to be made for them in addition to any support they receive through the SEND framework.

### **3. Health and Safety**

The Equality Act 2010 does not override health and safety legislation. If making a particular adjustment would increase the risks to the health and safety of any person (including the disabled pupil in question) then this is a relevant factor in deciding whether it is reasonable to make that adjustment.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments should be used to help determine where risks are likely to arise and what action can be taken to minimise those risks. Risk assessments should be specific to the individual pupil and the activities in question. Proportionate risk management relevant to the disability should be an ongoing process throughout a pupil's time at the school.

There might be instances when, although an adjustment could be made, it would not be reasonable to do so because it would endanger the health and safety either of the disabled pupil or of other people. There might be other instances where schools could make anticipatory reasonable adjustments in line with health and safety legislation, ensuring compliance with, and not infringing, that legislation.

### **4. Responsibility**

The responsibility for the Access Policy (strategy and plan) lies with the Governing Body and Headteacher. In terms of the day-to-day management of the policy, the SENCo is responsible for taking the lead in consultation with the Headteacher and other relevant members of staff and external advisors.

This policy (strategy and plan) sets out how St Nicolas School proposes to increase access to education for disabled pupils, specifically to:

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

We regularly undertake an Accessibility Audit every three years (reviewed annually) to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses in ensuring access for disabled pupils. The Accessibility Plan is then written in light of that audit in order to continue and enhance the provision offered by the school.

This policy has been written in line with guidance provided by Oxfordshire County Council in the "Schools Accessibility Strategy" May 2017.