

Introduction

Finstall First School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community, with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices or service delivery.

Our school will promote positive attitudes to disability and will not tolerate harassment of people with any form of physical or mental impairment. Finstall First School recognises that 'disability' is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in the education system and in society as a whole.

The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of:

- employment
- education
- access to goods, services and facilities including larger private clubs and land based transport services
- buying and renting land or property
- functions of public bodies, for example the issuing of licences

The Equality Act also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. This can apply to a carer or parent of a disabled person. In addition, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are wrongly perceived to be disabled.

What do we understand by 'disability'?

The definition of 'disability' under the Equality Act 2010

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with Special Educational Needs be included as disabled for the purposes of the Act. Behavioural difficulties arising from physical or mental impairments or from mental illness are also included.

This Disability Equality Scheme sets out the ways in which Finstall First School will meet its general and specific duties alongside our Whole School Vision and Aims.

Our Vision

‘Learning together, Preparing for life.’

Our Aims

- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum that meets the unique and varied needs of our pupils and enables all children to attain and achieve well in all subject areas in the National Curriculum.
- To enable all children to read well as Reading is at the heart of learning.
- To prepare children for life by developing their character – helping them to become more independent, organised, confident and resilient; to be good communicators, creative and able to solve problems; to be respectful, aware of differences, appreciative and reflective; to know how to keep themselves physically and mentally well and how to stay safe from a variety of risks.
- To recognise, accommodate and support the needs of all individuals.
- To provide a positive, safe and happy learning environment in which everyone is inspired and empowered to achieve the highest standard of which they are capable in all aspects of their life.
- To help everyone to make appropriate choices through praise, encouragement and by leading through example.
- To treat everyone with respect, encourage self-respect, listen to and value everybody’s opinions, contributions and ideas.
- To continually develop effective partnerships with parents and the wider community.
- To ensure that effective leadership and management enables us to continually improve all aspects of our school through systematic, rigorous self-evaluation.

This Scheme builds on our accessibility plan and develops our work further to include:

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational needs and applies to all vulnerable groups
- Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments
- Work with pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Involving the views of disabled pupils, their carers and staff where appropriate in identifying priority actions within the school improvement plan.

How we will meet the General Duty and Specific Duty.

The production of this Disability Equality Scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

The General Duty

By challenging any negative attitudes to disability we will 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.
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Involvement and developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers

We have a wide range of people associated to our Governing Body. They offer our school great experience and support. Some of our governors are also parents, so are available to take note of concerns, whilst on the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. Our other governors are often in school for various events and enjoy being able to get the views of both the children and adults. A Parents Questionnaire is also completed regularly, this gives all parents an opportunity to put across their views and ideas about the school – this may be organisational, curriculum or any other area of the school environment.

Gathering information

The school gathers information from people with a disability, by consulting with parents and pupils to encourage disability disclosure and reduce the number of 'unknown' disability status.

To comply with the DDA requirements we will consider in particular:

- The educational opportunities and achievements of pupils.
- The recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.

Gathering information will be an ongoing process. We will continue to collect data about disability over time and analyse our policies and procedures in the light of our findings.

Using the information to prepare the Action Plan and assess the impact

The school will use any new information or Government legislation, to prepare the Action Plan and to review annually the effectiveness of the actions taken. Where and when necessary, new action points will be included. Information will be analysed to show how much progress has been made in relation to disability equality. Educational achievements and wider opportunities for pupils with disabilities will be monitored. Further opportunities to promote equality will be included in subsequent Action Plans.

Reporting

There will be an annual report on this scheme demonstrating:

- Progress made
- Outcomes achieved
- Work in progress
- Amendments to the scheme.

This Scheme should be read in conjunction with the:

- School Access and Inclusion Plan
- The School Improvement Plan
- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

This report and its findings will be published on the schools Website and will be available to all school members in hard copy and/or in the form of alternative communication on request.

This Disability Equality Scheme was approved by the Governing Body on: 22nd October 2024

It will be reviewed in: October 2025

Governor responsible: Julie Sadler