

Springfield Infant School and Nursery

Disability Policy



Autumn 2023

Springfield is a Rights Respecting School.

Article 3- The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.

Article 12 – Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters.

Article 29 – Every child has the right to develop their personality, talents and abilities.

FOREWORD

Valuing diversity is central to achieving the overall aim of Springfield Infant School.

The governing body of Springfield Infant School is pleased to publish its Disability Equality Scheme. In developing the scheme, we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving disability equality and tackling discrimination and come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be tackled. We will ensure that this Disability Equality Scheme is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Disability Discrimination Act. We intend to use it to make real and tangible changes to how we conduct our business that will make a positive difference to the lives of disabled people. Promoting disability equality in Springfield Infant School will be a continuous process. It will be undertaken in partnership with the wider community and of course with disabled people themselves. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the scheme and we hope that we can continue to work together with disabled people to achieve disability equality in Springfield Infant School.

Governing Body

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to promote disability equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was a landmark in equality legislation, making it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his or her disability. It also required organisations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a disabled person could take a job, continue to work for an organisation or access services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality, which partly parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The duty to promote disability equality contains two elements – a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specified public authorities, including maintained schools. The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) states that the “overarching goal of the duty is to promote equality of opportunity”. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arise from attitudinal and environmental barriers. The duty to promote disability equality aims to overcome these barriers.

This Scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide.

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.

1.2 The general duty

The general duty to promote disability equality places a duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons

* the legislation includes in the definition of SEN any pupil who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of peers or a disability preventing or hindering access to educational facilities

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled person.
- 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.

1.3 The Specific Duty

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting out how it will fulfil its general and specific duties to promote disability equality. Disabled people must be involved in the development of the Scheme. The first Disability Equality Schemes should be published in December 2007 and should last for three years with an annual review of progress.

SPRINGFIELDS VISION AND VALUES

2.1 Our vision and values

At Springfield Infant school and Nursery we aim to enable everyone within the organisation to use their capabilities to advance as individuals, ensuring equality of opportunity and to enable children to have self respect, a belief in their own abilities, and respect for others, the environment, and the community in which they live and therefore become good citizens.

In order to achieve this we work together to ensure that the whole learning community is supported regardless of their ability, race, creed, gender or sexual orientation.

2.2 Who do we mean by "disabled people"?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition of a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, or epilepsy. Substantial means "more than minor or trivial" and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.

Disability is said to have an adverse effect if it affects one or more of the following

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects

- Speech
- Hearing
- Eyesight (unless brought to functionally useful level by spectacles or lenses)
- Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk or physical danger.

In considering what might constitute a substantial disadvantage, the school has taken account of a number of factors, eg

- The time and effort that might need to be expended by a disabled child
- The inconvenience, indignity or discomfort a disabled child might suffer
- The loss of opportunity or the diminished progress that a disabled child may make in comparison with his or her peers who are not disabled.

Another way of considering whether particular special educational needs are disabling is illustrated in the table below:

	Physical, hearing, vision	Speech, comprehension	Learning	Perception of risk or danger
Autistic spectrum		✓	Some	✓
Behaviour		Some	Some	✓
Dyslexic-type needs			✓	
Other learning needs		Some	✓	Some
Physical sensory	✓	Some	Some	Some

The number of disabled children and young people across England has been estimated as between 7% and 12%. The school collects information regarding staff and pupils by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

2.3 Discrimination Disabled People Face

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of different ways. These include

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information

- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people.

2.4 Action to Date

Our Disability Equality Scheme will take a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people at Springfield Infant School and Nursery. The Scheme builds on what we have done already to promote equality for disabled people.

For example we have adopted:

- An Accessibility Plan which aims to
 - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
 - Improve the physical environment at Springfield Infant School at Nursery to increase opportunities for disabled pupils
 - Ensure that disabled children are provided with information in formats that are accessible for them
- An Equal Opportunities Policy
- At Springfield Infant School and Nursery we believe that every individual is unique and special and that we each have the right to be valued, respected and offered equal opportunities, access and treatment. This is regardless of race, age, gender, physical or mental ability, background or creed. Our school aims underpin this. We try to promote equality and challenge discrimination and stereotyping to make our school truly inclusive and promote high achievement for all.

3. Involvement

3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme

To take account of views a questionnaire was sent to parent/carers. (see appendix 1) Submissions and views have been collated and appropriate adjustments included in the action plan.

The main users of the school are the pupils and 69 questionnaires were returned from parents/carers. In only 7 cases did parents/carers consider their child to have a disability under the Disability Discrimination act 1995 and these had all been disclosed to the school.

Parents and carers felt that the inclusion of pupils with disabilities was a strength of the school and that the school was always adjusting to meet the needs of individual pupils. No negative views were received.

One parent of a child with disabilities said that school staff, 'were fantastic with support and feedback. They inspire confidence and make me feel happy about

leaving my child in school.’ Other parents whose children suffered from allergies cited examples of the excellent provision that had been made to meet their children’s needs.

Parents/carers did provide some helpful comments. These were to widen the existing single gate onto the playground and to provide a school crossing outside of school.

3.2 Developing a Voice for Disabled Pupils, Staff and Parents/carers

All pupils have a voice in school through the Junior Governor assemblies, their class RHE sessions and strategies in class to provide dedicated individual time with staff such as ‘talk time.’

All Year 2 pupils are involved in transition planning and special projects to be continued in their new schools. Pupils transferring within the school, e.g. from Year 1 to year 2, have a transition meeting with their new teacher.

The Inclusion manager consults with pupils regarding their individual education plans. ‘Child speak’ copies individual education plans are then given to pupils. Parents and carers are also consulted and have copies of the individual education plans. The Inclusion Manager also holds regular ‘drop-in’ sessions for parents and carers.

Pupils with medical needs also have individual health care plans which are regularly reviewed.

The school strives to provide both formal and informal occasions in which parents and carers can speak to school staff. The social start to each school day is an example of an informal occasion to speak to school staff and there are planned formal occasions such as termly evening consultation sessions and the annual school survey. Parents and carers can contact the school office at any time to make arrangements to speak to school staff.

School staff are also proactive in contacting parents and carers regarding the progress or welfare of pupils.

All school staff have a ‘voice’ in school. There is an induction process for all new members of staff and they have a named buddy. Line management is clear and all staff are also involved in performance management. Information on disabled staff can be gathered within these meetings. Staff are encouraged to talk directly to the head teacher about concerns they face in the work place.

The school strives to ensure the inclusion and participation of its pupils, parent/carers and staff in all aspects of school life and to seek their views. This would include disabled pupils, staff and parents or carers.

3.3 The Governing Body

The process to appoint school governors at Springfield School applies equally to disabled parents or carers and community members. Parent representatives are currently in the majority on the governing body.

Governors take part in school activities and are able to consult with parents and carers. They also have ‘tea-parties’ with pupils to hear their views.

A public copy of the minutes of governing body meetings is kept in the school office.

3.6 Eliminating Harassment and Bullying

The discrimination, bullying or harassment of disabled children will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour, Discipline and Anti-Bullying Policy.

The discrimination, bullying or harassment of school employees will be dealt with in line with the school's Behaviour in the Workplace Policy. Employees can also raise concerns through the school's Confidential Reporting Policy.

There are separate arrangements for addressing unacceptable behaviour relating to visitors and service users within the Complaints Procedure.

3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments in school are made to cater for individual needs. Recent examples of adjustments made include additional adult support to help pupils eat their lunch and for pupils to participate in off-site and residential visits. Risk assessments are carried out for all off-site and residential activities.

When reasonable adjustments cannot be made the school will try to secure appropriate adjustments with the help of outside agencies and funding. A recent example of this was the funding for a hygiene room for pupils with toileting issues.

The effectiveness of adjustments are measured in the sense of well-being and progress of the individual concerned as a result of the adjustment. For pupils this is often measured in their behaviour, their self-esteem, their sense of security and enjoyment of school.

3.8 School Facility Lettings

The school is used by and for its own community, for example there are currently a number of outside providers who use school facilities, particularly the school hall, to run after school clubs for pupils. The PTA, Friends of Springfield, also organise events for pupils such as the school disco. There is one major annual event, the Summer Fair, involving the wider community. There are currently no other lettings or use of the school's facilities by the wider community.

The school car park is very small but there is one disabled parking bay. Parking often has to be on Sackville Road.

3.9 Information, Performance and Evidence.

a. Pupil Achievement

The school's assessment policy explains how the achievement of all pupils is collected and analysed. The achievement of all pupils is tracked at an individual level and is analysed regularly by class teachers and the senior leadership team. If differences in levels of achievement are identified, strategies are put in place to deal with them.

b. Learning Opportunities

September 2023

There is an expectation that educational opportunities at Springfield should be available to all of its pupils. Springfield aims to be a fully inclusive school.

c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including Behaviour cases)

The school's admission policy is common to all local education authority and controlled schools in West Sussex whose selection of pupils is based on catchment areas. The county admissions office deals with admissions for all schools in the area.

Springfield is a caring community in which children are encouraged to be thoughtful, courteous and considerate of others. Our aim is to work towards self-discipline for each child and a positive approach is used where good behaviour is praised. The school has not excluded any pupils for several years

d. Social Relationships

Positive social relationships are encouraged at all times and staff take steps to improve social relationships between pupils, e.g. circle time in class, RHE lessons, SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning) support.

e. Employing, Promoting and Training Disabled Staff

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Springfield recognises the importance of assessing the impact of its current policies and practices on disability equality, in order to ensure that they do not have an adverse impact on its disabled stakeholders and to inform future planning.

Questions the school needs to think about are:

- ***What are the training needs of the school regarding the DES?***
- ***Who will be involved in assessing impact and how will the school involve disabled people?***
- ***How will the school determine priorities?***
- ***Will the school need external expertise?***
- ***Who will the school report the results to?***
- ***Has contact been made with trade unions at the school?***

Springfield therefore regularly monitors the impact of the school's policies. This is captured by means of the school's equalities monitoring process which involves

- Consultation with disabled stakeholders, in order that areas for change can be identified
- Analysis of information from data collection relating to disability.

This Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and therefore one which will be subject to review and alteration in response to the school's impact assessments, and views expressed by its disabled members, and will be used to drive forward the promotion of disability equality. It will therefore be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve the school's vision of a welcoming and diverse community.

5. OUR PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE ACTION PLAN

Access to the curriculum

Behaviour and exclusions – Is the behaviour policy differentiated with reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils?

Teaching and Learning - Does the school ensure all teaching staff are aware of the General Inclusion Statement and that they apply it in their planning and teaching? Is joint planning time made available during the school day for teachers and teaching assistants/LSA on a regular basis?

Curriculum – developing positive attitudes – Does the school sex education policy specifically take account of the needs of disabled people? Does the school ensure that some part of the curriculum in each year raises disability equality issues?

Data collection, monitoring and assessment – Is the achievement of disabled pupils monitored by impairment? Does the school identify all disabled pupils in their database? Does the school have ways to identify all disabled parents and their access needs? Are disabled pupils' achievements tracked in addition to their general attainment levels?

Participation and engagement

Engaging disabled pupils, staff, parents and local community developing a voice (parents and governing body) – Does the junior governors (school council) include disabled representatives? Are disabled pupils given positions of responsibility? Are all governors aware of their statutory responsibility to promote disability equality?

Eliminating harassment and bullying - Does the school's anti-bullying policy specifically refer to bullying which can be directed at disabled children and adults?

Employment

Employing and promoting, training disabled staff

Does the school monitor the number of staff it has who count as disabled people under the DDA 2005? Does the school provide reasonable adjustments for disabled staff? Does the school allow disabled staff additional time off for treatment for their condition without penalising them?

Access to information and services

Lunchtime or after school clubs and trips – How does the school ensure that all pupils, parents/carers or staff can participate in visits/activities?

Medical and personal care needs - Have disabled children and their parents/carers been consulted on how they want the procedure or administration of medication carried out?

Health and Safety - Have evacuation procedures been developed and do they take full account of the needs of disabled people? Are Care Plans in place for the meeting of health needs of the administration of medication?

Admissions, Transitions - Is induction and timely support provided to pupils and parents/carers, and staff. Are reasonable enquiries made at admission or transition stages to find out whether pupils or existing pupils have additional needs?

Physical access

Lettings and use of building by community – Does the school's lettings policy specify the type of adjustments that the school and other local services can provide? Does the school examine capital projects to maximise access and reasonable adjustments?

Information we will collect

This scheme will monitor -

**Disabled pupil attainment
Effectiveness of reasonable adjustments
Recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff
Admissions of disabled pupils
Exclusion of disabled pupils**

We will use the results of our monitoring and assessment activities to make reasonable adjustments, review the effectiveness of this plan and identify future priorities.

Looking ahead

We are not aware of any major challenges at the current time that may impact on our work to promote disability equality.

6. MAKING IT HAPPEN

6.1 Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the school's vision backed up by key actions which will be carried out within the next three years. There will be:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales
- Specified time-scale for process and review:

The ***governing body*** will monitor and review this scheme, and present findings annually, to all members of the school community, and available in alternative forms of communication which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

6.2 Evaluation

There will be internal evaluation of this scheme

6.3 Publication

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Access Plan

6.4 Reporting

There will be an annual report on this scheme demonstrating:

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

This report will be available to all school members in hard copy, and in the form of alternative communication where necessary.

6. 5 Links with other school plans and policies:

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with the School Access Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to:

1. The School Improvement Plan
2. The Equal Opportunities Policy
3. Equalities Monitoring procedure
4. Anti-Bullying Policy
5. Protection of Employees and associated documents (including Bullying and Harassment)

Senior Member of Staff Responsible Headteacher

Designated Member of Staff RHE Curriculum Group

Governor Responsible Chair of Governors

If you need further copies of this document, or would like the document in another format, such as enlarged print, or another language, please contact:

SCHOOL Springfield Infant School

Telephone: 01903-219243

E-mail: office@springfieldschool.co.uk

Appendix 1

Disability Questionnaire for Parents/Carers.

We are keen to ensure that all our pupils get the most out of their time with us and can access the broad range of curriculum and other activities we provide. Getting an overall picture of disability in the school helps us to plan for equal opportunities.

Please complete the following questionnaire for each child you have in the school. It should only take a few minutes. The school will collate submissions and all responses will be treated in complete confidence.

Pupils name (optional)

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Under the Disability Discrimination act 1995, a person is described as having 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 activities.

Long-term is defined as 'having lasted or is expected to last for 12 months'. It also includes people who have subsequently recovered, as long as their disability was as defined under the act.

A physical or mental impairment includes:

- Sensory impairment
- Impairments relating to mental functioning, including learning difficulties/disabilities
- Long-term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy and asthma

Considering this statement, would you consider your child as having a disability under the Disability discrimination Act 1995?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

If you consider your child to have a disability, which of the following would you identify with?

Please tick all boxes applicable.

- Physical/mobility difficulties
- Dyslexia/specific learning need
- Blind/partially sighted
- Deaf/hard of hearing
- Mental health difficulties
- Unseen disabilities such as asthma, diabetes and allergies
- Multiple disabilities
- Communication difficulties
- Severe disfigurement

Other (please state)

Continued.....

If you consider your child to have a disability, have you disclosed it to the school?

Yes

No

If no, please state reason(s)

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In order to meet the needs of people with disabilities, what, in your opinion, do you think our school should do, do better or do differently from what it already does?

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What, in your opinion, does our school already do well and should remain unchanged?

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