

BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL AND MUSIC COLLEGE



DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY

Updated: January 2013
Policy duration: 2 years
Committee: Personnel

The following terms shall be interpreted as indicated below when used hereinafter within this policy:

- a) 'Trustees' refers to the registered trustees of the Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School Foundation, registered charity number 511793
- b) 'Academy trust' refers to the holding body of the Academy namely, Blue Coat Church of England Academy Ltd, registered company number 7594562
- c) 'Blue Coat School' refers to the physical entity of Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College
- d) Any reference to either 'the school' or 'the Academy' contained within this policy is taken to refer to the appropriate given body within context

Assessment of Policy's Impact

The effectiveness of this policy and its impact will be assessed by the Personnel Committee who will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy every 2 years. The evidence base for assessment will be presented as agenda items at the Personnel Committee meetings.

Disability Equality Policy

Definitions

Reference to 'disabled people' includes disabled children, young people and adults, as pupils, employees, governors, parents and carers and other members of the wider community that might use the school premises for leisure or other activities. The definition of disability covers a broad spectrum of impairments including cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, HIV, multiple sclerosis, hearing or sight impairments, mobility difficulties and people with diagnosed mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities.

We believe that:

- Disabled people should enjoy the same civil rights as non-disabled people
- Choice, control, respect and self esteem are important factors in all disabled people's lives
- Disabled people are frequently excluded from mainstream activities, not because they have an impairment, but because action has not been taken which would overcome its affects
- Disabled people should be able to participate fully in the life of the school and should be engaged in the planning and development of the services they need within the school environment
- We should continue to develop and deliver services in a way that enhances rather than diminishes disabled people's independence

We are committed to:

- Taking positive action to improve the environment and resources within our school community
- Regular monitoring of services and resources provided and to evaluate their effectiveness in making a difference in the lives and well being of disabled people In our school community
- Adopting annual targets for improvement and report on the proposals and progress of these targets

ACCESS:

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We are committed to ensuring that all our services are accessible to disabled people by:

- Providing information to enable disabled people make informed decisions about the choices available to them
- Providing public information in a range of formats (e.g. large print, audio tape, ICT, Braille) on request and accepting and responding to correspondence in these formats
- Maintaining assistive technologies where appropriate and developing new ones as these become available e.g. computer software
- Ensuring that all public meetings are held in accessible venues and that all publicity relating to them indicates that a British Sign Language interpreter will be provided when requested in advance
- Ensuring that an advocate can support people with learning difficulties when required
- Continuing, in consultation with disabled people, to carry out a phased programme of physical access improvements to all areas of the school that are open to the public
- Ensuring that all new buildings constructed on the school site are fully accessible
- Continuing consultation with the Health and Safety committee and advisors to carry out regular risk assessments and emergency procedures and to implement their advice.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING:

We aim to have a work force that reflects the needs of the community we serve; in particular, we would want to

- Ensure disabled people have access to employment opportunities within the school organisation
- Take positive action to encourage disabled people to apply for jobs within the school organisation
- Ensure that job descriptions and person specifications do not contain unnecessary requirements
- Guarantee interviews to disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the post, or who could do so if reasonable adjustments to premises, working practice and equipment were made
- Provide guidance to middle leaders and line managers on supporting disabled people in the school community and environment including improving understanding of the processes for reasonable adjustments to roles and workplaces
- Provide car parking near to the work location for badge holders
- Support employees who acquire an impairment during their employment with the school, and assist them to remain within the school and maintain their existing career path where possible
- Raise awareness of leaders of their responsibilities through training and briefings and to ensure that there is no discrimination, harassment or victimisation of employees due to their disability
- Ensure that disabled employees are given the opportunity to discuss any issues relating to their work which are affected by their disability including the suitability of any adjustments which are in place
- Ensure that the continuous professional development programme equips governors and staff to understand and implement this policy
- Develop a staff network and focus group through which disabled staff can be consulted and participate in future policy development.
- Establish a focus group for regular review and monitoring of the school's recruitment policy.

PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY

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We will seek to protect and promote the rights of disabled people by:

- Promoting and publicising this policy and working to raise awareness of disability issues within the school community using a range of formats
- Inform the governing body and staff about the policy and about legislation specifically relating to disabled people
- Provide disability equality training for staff
- Audit and monitor proposals by statutory agencies and other bodies that particularly affect disabled people within the school community and environment
- Developing good practice and aim to become a centre of excellence

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

We will seek to deliver our duties to promote disability equality through understanding the needs, aspirations and priorities of disabled people. We aim to do this through the

- Use of school-based focus group for this purpose and provide support, resources and information to enable it to function effectively
- Explore and develop other means of effective engagement and consultation with disabled people
- Offer help and training to encourage disabled people to contribute to the focus group
- Take steps to ensure that the specific needs of disabled people are taken into account
- Ensure that people with learning difficulties have appropriate support in order to fully participate in the group

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Governors are fully accountable for the policy and delegate the implementation of the policy to the Headteacher.

DEMONSTRATING DUE REGARD

Data about the school population and differences of outcome:

- The school has data on its composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by proficiency in English.
- The school has data on its composition broken down by types of impairment and special educational need.
- The school has data on inequalities of outcome and participation connected with ethnicity, gender and disability and with proficiency in English.
- The school uses data on inequalities of outcome and involvement when setting itself objectives for achievable and measurable improvements.
- There are statements of the school's responsibilities under the Equality Act in various school documents eg the school improvement plan and self evaluation papers, the prospectus, routine bulletins and newsletters and occasional letters to parents.

Staffing

- The school's programme for continuing professional development (CPD) includes reference to equalities matters, both directly and incidentally.

- There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and administrative.

Behaviour and Safety

- There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents.
- Surveys and focus groups show that most pupils feel safe from all kinds of bullying.

Curriculum

- Focused attention is paid to the needs of specific groups of pupils, for example: those who are learning English as an additional and there is extra, or special, provision for certain groups as appropriate.
- There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and mutual understanding.
- There are activities across the curriculum that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Fostering good relations

- To promote and enhance community cohesion and a sense of shared belonging in the school and in the school's neighbourhood.
- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity.