



URSULINE HIGH SCHOOL  
**Wimbledon**

# Disability Equality Policy

**Month Year**

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**At the outset it is important to note that this is not a one off policy for access to The School, The Curriculum and other activities for people with a disability. It is a scheme that should be implemented and reviewed and actions taken over a period of time. The scheme that we have to identify to bring us within the law identifies what action needs to be taken and the timescale.**

**Excerpts from “Making it Happen – Implementing the Duty to Promote Disability Equality.”**

### **Disability Discrimination Act**

Schools have to have due regard to the following 6 prongs in the operation of their organisation :

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled persons;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act (see Existing Duties);
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life;
- Take steps to take account of a disabled person’s impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other persons.

### **Disability Equality Scheme**

Ursuline High School needs to have a Disability Equality Scheme in place to comply with the law (should have been in place by 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006).

The scheme must include

- A statement of how disabled pupils, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use school facilities have been involved in developing the scheme;
- An Action Plan – the steps the school will take to meet the Duty;
- Arrangements for gathering information about performance of the school on disability equality e.g. pupil achievement or employment and retention of disabled staff;
- Arrangements for assessing the impact of policies, procedures and practices of the school on disability equality and improving these when necessary;
- Details of how the school is going to use the information gathered, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and preparing subsequent schemes;
- The scheme must be reviewed and publicly commented upon each year and revised every three years.

## **Guiding Principles of The Duty**

- Proportionality – balance other needs and factors
- Effectiveness – it works
- Involvement – local disabled people, staff and service users
- Transparency – can process and expenditure be easily tracked?
- Social Model of Disability thinking to ethos and all policies, practices and procedures

## **The Process of Producing the Disability Equality Scheme**

The school must

- Involve disabled people in producing the scheme and developing the action plan.
- Identify how they will gather and analyse evidence to inform their actions and track progress.
- Set out how they will assess the impact of their existing and proposed activities on disabled people.
- Produce an action plan for the next three years.
- State how the school will implement General Duty.
- Consultation with disabled people in production, setting targets and monitoring of the scheme.
- State how it meets with the strategic priorities of the organisation.
- Collect and analyse data – e.g. achievement of disabled pupils.
- Impact assess the policies, practices and procedures on disabled people.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in promoting disability equality.
- Detail the action the organisation will take and by when.
- Know how their school will have achieved its objectives.
- Report on their progress every year and review and make appropriate revisions to this scheme at least every three years.

## **The School Scheme should cover**

- Achievement of pupils
- Disability in curriculum
- Teaching and Learning
- Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents
- Removing barriers – physical, communication and curriculum
- Lettings and use by community
- Eliminating harassment and bullying
- Employing, promoting and training disabled staff
- Monitoring
- Assessment
- Governance and relations with parents
- Breaks, lunchtime, after school activities and trips
- How the school involved disabled people

- Making the school more accessible – link with the School Access Plan

## **Required Demonstrable Actions**

### **Measuring Outcomes**

- Admissions, exclusions and educational attainment of disabled pupils in schools;
- Accessibility and suitability of education and associated services;
- Recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff;

### **Outcomes must**

- Inform schools whether their action plan is delivering greater equality;
- Ensure whether the school have the right priorities.

## **Benefits of the General Duty**

- Better targeted policies for the needs of all;
- Representation of different disabled people at all levels;
- Improvements in perceptions of education services, and more satisfaction with these;
- Greater public confidence in education services;
- Filling current gaps in education services;
- Better involvement and more participation by staff, pupils, parents and members of the public from the local community;
- Better targeted information about the education services to disabled people;
- Better access to education services.

## **Benefits to Employment**

- Achieve a more representative workforce;
- Attract able staff;
- Avoid losing or undervaluing able staff;
- Provide expertise and role models for disabled pupils;
- Improve staff morale and productivity;
- Improve staff management;
- Identify and develop good practice;
- Avoid claims of unlawful discrimination.

## **Benefits to Policy Making**

- Encourage staff to be more aware of issues concerning particular groups;
- Encourage better co-ordination across departments and functions (for example, school capital improvements or the planning of new schools under Building Schools for the Future);
- Contribute to more informed decision-making;

- Ensure that policies are properly targeted;
- Improve the ability to deliver education for all in an accessible way, and to carry out their functions so that they meet the diversity of needs;
- Encourage greater openness in governing bodies, school leadership groups and policy-makers;
- Increase involvement of disabled people in policy-making;
- Increase confidence in the education services, particularly amongst disabled people.

### **Benefits to Education**

In relation to education, in successfully applying the Duty, schools will be able to ensure that their disabled pupils and learners can reach their potential by tackling the barriers to their learning. OFSTED has found that the best lessons take place where the delivery of teaching and learning responds effectively to the individual needs of the pupil or student. A common characteristic of the highest performing schools is an inclusive ethos that focuses on raising achievement for all learners.

The Duty will mesh with the existing development plans and performance improvement strategies of schools to take account of the particular barriers to achievement for disabled pupils and learners.