

# Disability, Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan 2013-17



**Priorslee Primary Academy**

**Reviewed September 2015**

**Next review due: September 2017**

# Disability, Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

## Mission Statement: Values, Ethos and Vision

Priorslee Academy has high ambitions for all its pupils and staff irrespective of religion, race or any disability, and expects and encourages them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life. We are a fully inclusive school and this scheme outlines how we will promote equality in the delivery of our service to both employees and pupils. In both its delivery of services and the employment of its staff Priorslee Academy will ensure that no person will be discriminated against due to any of the protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Equality Act 2010 includes discrimination due to association or perception (where it is believed that an individual has a particular characteristic). The characteristics protected by the act are:

- age (as an employee - but not applicable to students)
- disability
- ethnicity
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

### **Our aims are:**

- To provide a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum for pupils
- To ensure all pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum
- To inspire and motivate pupils to achieve their best in all that they do
- To provide experiences which enable pupils to see opportunities beyond their surroundings
- To ensure that adults are able to work to full potential in a conducive setting

Our school will not tolerate harassment of young people or adults; this also includes pupils who are carers of disabled family members or parents. This policy and action plan works in conjunction with the Academy's other policies around equality and diversity in line with their strategic objectives. This policy and the Equality Act deals with the way in which the academy treats its current and prospective staff and pupils but the relationship

between one individual and another is not within its scope. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with policies such as: Child Protection, SEN, Anti-Bullying, data protection.

## **Our Duties and the Role of the Governing Body**

### **The Academy**

Priorslee Academy is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Equality Policy and to deal with unfair and/or unlawful discriminatory incidents. The academy will promote equality of opportunity and diversity opposing unlawful discrimination against any member of the academy community. All staff will:

- be up to date and aware of their responsibilities in regards to equality within the academy
- engage with the academy in eliminating any discrimination and act as a good example to students
- promote a positive working environment
- report back to their managers immediately on any incidents relating to discrimination or victimisation, so that these incidents can be reviewed and action taken where necessary
- are aware that failure to comply with this policy may be grounds for disciplinary procedures to be followed

### **The principal and senior leadership team**

The principal, with the support of the rest of the senior leadership team, will ensure that this policy and its procedures are implemented and followed by all staff. They will also:

- report back to the Advisory Board and Directors on how the plan is working and any amendments that they feel should be made, as well as feedback from staff, students and parents
- take appropriate action where discrimination or victimisation occurs
- identify and investigate any patterns with regard to exclusions and poor attendance in respect of particular groups
- ensure that the performance of different groups of students is monitored and evaluated so that the particular needs of different students are met
- provide monitoring reports for the Advisory Board and Directors to review
- ensure the impact of additional support on standards achieved is evaluated

## Advisory Board

The Priorslee Advisory Board will ensure that all academy policies promote the equality principles detailed in this policy. In addition to this they will ensure that the academy:

- effectively communicates and adopts this policy throughout the academy correctly
- complies with all equality legislation
- sets equality objectives
- monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the equality policy on a regular basis, making any amendments to improve on the plan when and where necessary
- monitors educational outcomes, incidents of harassment and discrimination, and referrals by a range of criteria including disability
- observes the provisions in this policy in relation to recruitment, selection and promotion procedures
- ensures that resources are allocated to the promotion of equality of opportunity

The General Duty requires that every public authority should:

- Promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and adults;
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Promote positive attitudes towards all pupils and adults;
- Encourage and support disabled all members of our community to participate fully in school life.

Public bodies are required to comply with the Specific Duties which are:

- To publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) this includes a three-year Action Plan;
- To involve disabled people in the development of the DES;
- To take the steps set out in the Action Plan (unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so);
- To publish an annual report on progress with the Action Plan;

This scheme and the accompanying Action Plan set out how the governing body of Priorslee Academy will promote equality of opportunity for young people and adults. Duties as part of the Equality Act 2010 require the governing body to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

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

The information below is a summary of how we have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Please contact us if you would like to see copies of any of our school policies or refer to the policies section of our school website:

- We are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 that it is unlawful to discriminate, treat some people less fairly or put them at a disadvantage.
- Our school governors and Priorslee Multi Academy Trust Directors, have been briefed on their legal responsibilities under the equality Act 2010 and have also been involved in supporting the school to meet its public sector equality duty.
- We try to keep an accurate record, when possible and appropriate, of the protected characteristics of our pupils and employees.
- We have an academy Behaviour policy that outlines our expectations of both pupils and staff in their interactions with each other, including our approach to tackling bullying, prejudice and discrimination.
- We deal promptly and effectively with all incidents and complaints of bullying and harassment
- We keep a record of all such incidents and notify those affected of what action we have taken.
- We provide training to all staff in relation to dealing with bullying and incidents of harassment.
- We have a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy that outlines the provision the school makes for pupils with special educational needs.
- Our complaints policy sets out the procedures through which we deal with any complaints
- We aim to observe and implement the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination in our employment practices.
- We pay due regard within our recruitment practices, to safeguarding and protecting our pupils.
- We have procedures for addressing staff discipline, conduct and grievances.

## **Employment provisions**

Priorslee Academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

As an employer, Priorslee Academy strives to ensure that discrimination and harassment is eliminated in our employment practice and we actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce. The academy will not discriminate against a potential employee in respect of whether to offer a job or the terms on which a job is offered. With regards to existing employees, the academy will not discriminate against an individual in respect of the benefits, facilities and services it offers including training opportunities, promotion or dismissal (including discipline and suspension). All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit, ability and in compliance with the law.

The academy is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to disability for employees or potential employees and will ensure that staff with disabilities have access to appropriate support in the form of aids, adaptations and other specialist services and will make reasonable adjustments to arrangements or practices to alleviate disadvantage. More information about our procedures relating to staff can be found in the following policies:

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff Appraisal Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct/Induction
- Staff Grievance Policy

## **Enquiries about health and disability**

The academy will not enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work for the position that has been applied for.

In some instances the academy may decide to ask necessary health questions after a job offer has been made to an individual. In such a situation the academy will ensure that health-related questions are targeted, necessary and relevant to the job applied for.

## **Training**

All staff will receive equal opportunities training which will include disability awareness / equality. This training will be part of staff induction as well as the CPD programme. All staff will receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

The academy will ensure that no member of staff is denied access to any form of training because of an inaccessible venue or because the provision does not account for their disability. Staff with disabilities will be actively encouraged to attend course which will support their career progression and personal development.

## **Discipline and Suspension**

The academy is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated fairly and consistently and this is held to account through our staff appraisal discipline, conduct, and grievance policies. Staff performance will be monitored and we expect that staff will feel able to voice complaints and grievances in confidence, trusting that the academy will deal with their grievances fully, promptly, and fairly.

The academy puts great faith in all its employees, and hopes never to have to discipline anyone as a result of misconduct.

## **Exemptions to the Equality Act 2010**

### **Bullying**

All forms of prejudice-motivated bullying are taken seriously and dealt with equally and firmly. The academy has an Anti-Bullying Policy

(<http://www.priorsleeprimaryacademy.com/media/5610/Anti-Bullying-Policy-March-2014.doc>) and a Behaviour Policy

(<http://www.priorsleeprimaryacademy.com/media/9807/Behaviour-policy-May-2015.doc>) to cover the areas that are not within scope of the Equality Act.

## **Curriculum**

The content of the curriculum is explicitly excluded from the Act. The academy will include a full range of issues, ideas and materials in the syllabus, in the aim to expose students to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial.

In particular, the academy will ensure that:

- the delivery of the curriculum does not subject individual students to discrimination
- teaching styles, methods, language, questioning and classroom management will be inclusive and engage all students
- suitable resources will be chosen which motivate and are sensitive to different groups, cultures and backgrounds
- teaching / assessment strategies are reviewed in relation to variations in learning and attainment
- each subject is reviewed to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the principles in this policy

## **Religious observance**

The Act allows for academies to organise acts of worship, celebrate religious festivals or other forms of collective religious observance. The academy respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, students and parents, and will comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## **Uniforms**

The Act does not deal specifically with uniform or other aspects of appearance such as hair colour, jewellery and make-up, but the general requirement not to discriminate in the treatment of students still applies.

## **Accessibility Plan**

The school's accessibility plan outlines the school's vision and values for improving children's access to the curriculum, to the environment and to information provided by the school. The disability provisions in the Equality Act are different from those for the other protected characteristics referenced above in a number of ways.

In particular, it works in only one direction; it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. The academy may treat a disabled person more favourably than a person who is not disabled and therefore may have to make reasonable adjustments to practices



to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that a disabled person can benefit to the same extent that a person without that disability can.

Priorslee Academy continuously considers and reviews its facilities and physical features to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible for all people as part of its general accessibility planning. The Academy Accessibility Plan (see foot of the document), aims to:

- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum;
- improve the physical environment to enable disabled students, staff and visitors to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled people

### **Making reasonable adjustments**

The academy will make reasonable adjustments for individuals in the event that the academy does something that places a disabled person at a disadvantage compared to other people.

Reasonable steps will be taken to try and avoid the disadvantage of disabled persons. This will particularly be the case where a disabled student does not have a special educational needs (SEN) Education, Health and Care Plan or where the Education, Health and Care Plan does not provide the auxiliary aid or service. There should be no assumption, however, that if an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEN regime then it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. All decisions would depend on the facts of each individual case.

### **Characteristics of our School**

Priorslee Academy is a two-form entry primary academy, currently consisting of 14 classes. From September 2014, all classes became single age groups of 30 pupils. The academy traditionally serves the residential area of Priorslee, an area of private housing estates. The catchment area has become more established with fewer new families resulting in around 60% of the total academy population now coming from outside of this catchment area. The multicultural dimension of the academy is reflected in the 30% of pupils who offer the school a cultural diversity. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or statements of special educational needs is below average. Our building is all on one level; we have one disabled toilet.

### **Our Disability Profile**

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 definitions of disability and our assessment of individual cases, the following data outlines our profile of disability.

*11 (3%) of children in our academy are described as having a disability. 2 of these are children with a diagnosed autistic spectrum disorder. There are no children with a diagnosed speech and language or development coordination disorder.*

It is very difficult to collect accurate data and make an assessment of disability amongst our parents and others in our school community. This is because of issues of privacy and confidentiality. This can also be the case for some members of staff; however, we have sought this information through confidential questionnaires. As a result of the difficulties in gathering such information it is not possible to produce reliable statistics on these groups. However, it should be noted that the school recognises its responsibilities towards all parents, staff and other stakeholders and promotes inclusion and access for all.

### **Involvement and Consultation**

Priorslee Academy has undertaken a range of activities to consult with pupils, staff and members of the wider community to identify issues and priorities for improvement.

### **Communicating with Pupils around Equality and Diversity**

Priorslee Academy uses the following methods of communicating with its pupils around equality and diversity issues:

- PHSE and Citizenship
- RE
- School Council discussion and minutes
- Surveys

Information is also gathered from a variety of sources:

- Medical registers
- SEN register
- School performance data
- School admissions data
- Data related to participation in extracurricular and residential visits

Consultation is on-going in order to monitor the impact of our scheme and evaluate our actions to inform future planning.

To meet our equality duty, it is essential that we monitor aspects of school life to identify whether there is any adverse impact on children. The school monitors its provision in the following areas and pays regard to:

- The role of a school as a service provider - to meet the needs of the 'customer';
- We aim to pay due regard to any parents who cannot read newsletters and other communication from school;
- Open evenings, concerts - we ensure that there is access to all school activities for any pupil or adult

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for measuring performance and ensuring that we as an academy are enabling and promoting equal access to all curriculum options and providing employment opportunities. This is vitally important in establishing whether or not current systems are having an adverse impact on any children or adults.

We will monitor and review the progress of the Action Plan on an annual basis. Monitoring and review of equality will similarly receive appropriate review. The impact of other school policies will be assessed by the policy authors as and when they are reviewed, as part of the school improvement cycle. External scrutiny of equality or disability issues can be undertaken at any time by inspectorates such as OfSTED. Issues relating to episodes of reported inequality will be captured and monitored.

## Action Plan for Priorslee Primary Academy 2013-17

Our Action Plan forms part of our Disability Equality Scheme and shows what we intend to do over the next three years to meet the needs of our school community and our statutory duties. Overall responsibility for the plan is taken by the Principal and the Governing Body. It will be an evolving plan which will be amended in response to feedback from pupils, staff and the wider community and will reflect new initiatives that the academy undertakes to better meet equality and diversity needs.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
To improve outside lighting around school for any individual with any type of impairment	Assessment of areas where light is insufficient Advice for appropriate lighting.	Principal, reviewed with Governing Body	December 2013	All areas around school are sufficiently lit during darker mornings and evenings in the winter months	
To increase the access to the demountables	Install ramps and hand rail	Principal, reviewed with Governing Body	September 2013	Doorways are reached by a ramp with suitable rails for disabled users	
To undertake whole-school update for the Disability Register	Update the disability register	SENCO	September 2015	Screen staff for disabilities	
Better access around the car park and entrance gates	Widen pathways and entrances to school for parents (Building Contractor	Principal	December 2013	Footpaths widened for wheelchair users. Building Contractor to undertake	

Raise awareness of events in the community suitable for disabled pupils	TAWs iCan2 activities are publicised via the school website.	SENCO	Ongoing	Parents use school website as a signpost for events in the local community	
Specialist support and advice for Dyslexia	Staff meeting from Dyslexia specialist to raise awareness and scrutinise school procedures	SENCO	December 2014	Provide specific resources and strategies for pupils with Dyslexia or Dyslexic traits to access the curriculum	
Medical conditions	<p>Whole-staff training for asthma and epi-pen use</p> <p>Care plans in place for all children with asthma with parents and school nurse</p> <p>Correct procedures for storage and administration of medicine</p>	Principal/ SENCO	December 2014	Medical conditions of children are managed effectively to allow inclusion and full attendance	

Access to off-site venues	<p>Ensure venues and means of transport are vetted for suitability.</p> <p>Inclusion of specific pupils on risk assessments for trip planning</p>	Principal	Ongoing	All pupils are able to access all school visits or trips and take part in a range of activities	
Taking tests	<p>Ensure appropriate testing and reports (e.g. LSAT) are completed in order to apply for access arrangements for pupils with additional needs.</p> <p>Application for specific access arrangements takes place within correct timescales</p>	SENCO	Ongoing (annually)	<p>Access arrangements meet individual needs when taking tests are applied for and arrangements made and support tests.</p> <p>Barriers to pupil achieving their full potential are reduced.</p>	
Evacuation of building	<p>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans updated annually as pupils move to a new classroom each September.</p>	SENCO	Ongoing (annually)	<p>Early identification of pupils</p> <p>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan completed for each pupil</p>	

