



# **The Sunflower Federation Accessibility Plan**

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**(Due to be reviewed 2025)**

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## **GENERAL**

### **1. Mission**

The Sunflower Federation aims to be a caring community of schools that are dedicated to enhancing individual development, founded on high professional standards, mutual trust and respect for the essential worth and human dignity of all its members.

### **2. Introduction**

This policy is a statement of the principles and practices of the Sunflower Federation Schools to ensure that discrimination against people with a disability at school does not take place. All staff are expected to be aware of the principles and practices within this policy and to treat disabled people, whether pupils, staff or visitors, fairly and with respect.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995 and amendments 2005) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) place a responsibility on local authorities and schools to improve access by making reasonable improvements and adjustments to school education for disabled pupils, as stated in part 4. Furthermore, the act under parts 2 and 3 covers disabled staff and members of the public, which would include visitors and parents.

The definition of disability is very broad. A person is deemed to have a disability "if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities". This definition includes most of those people with a special educational need plus those who have medical conditions, disfigurements and other impairments, which count as disabilities but are not necessarily special educational needs.

Within this policy, the definition of a person with a disability is one who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is described in the school's SEN policy. The Accessibility Policy addresses provision for any person with permanent or temporary disability.

Discrimination can take place in two ways:

- Treating a person "less favourably" than others for a reason relating directly to their disability.
- Failing to make a "reasonable adjustment" to ensure they are not placed at a "substantial disadvantage" for a reason relating to their disability.

### **3. Key Objective**

The Sunflower Federation will monitor and review its operation and procedures in order 'to reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for all pupils, prospective pupils and adults with a disability'.

### **4. Working Principles**

The Sunflower Federation seeks to ensure that no member of the School is unfairly discriminated against as a result of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, social background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or sexual orientation.

To this end, the school will seek to:

- Fulfil its legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and any related or subsequent legislation.
- Identify and remove any unjustified discrimination against people with a disability.
- Pursue a programme of development and improvement in facilities, in procedures and in the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff to meet the needs of people with a disability.

- Ensure that disabled staff and pupils have access to the appropriate support and adaptations that enable them to be fully included in the life of the school.
- Take into account the views of individual pupils or members of staff when their requirements are being assessed.
- Provide appropriate information and support to members of staff working with disabled people, either as colleagues or pupils.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable staff and pupils who become disabled during their time at the School to continue in their chosen career or school career, wherever possible.
- Accommodate disabled visitors, wherever reasonably possible, to enable them to participate in events held on school premises.
- Ensure that school premises are accessible and safe for disabled people, as far as this is reasonably practicable and within the constraints of existing buildings.
- The school recognises and values parents' knowledge of their child's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents' and child's right to confidentiality.
- The school provides all pupils with appropriate and balanced curriculum, that is individualised and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles by
  - setting suitable learning challenges
  - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individual and groups of pupils.

## **ACCESSIBILITY FOR PUPILS**

### **1. Admissions**

Within the admissions process the Federation ensures that;

- All pupils have an EHCP in place
- Transition plan meets the needs of the individual child
- Prior to admission parents meet and inform the teacher and nursing team of specific details including medical problems
- Health and care plans are put in place
- Transport is offered to students according the HCC transport policy
- Transport staff are trained by school staff

### **2. Accessing Curriculum**

Timetabling is continually reviewed to ensure all pupils have access to a full range of facilities and experiences commensurate with their needs. The deployment of staff in support of those students whose care needs, communication difficulties and behavioural issues require additional support and intervention is also kept under review.

Careful consideration is also given to medical and physical needs with support and advice being sought from appropriate health professionals deployed in the school by the NHS Trust. The school will continue to seek and follow advice of LA services, such as Specialist Schools Support, Educational Psychologists, SEN advisers, and LA officers. Continuing Professional Development of all staff, induction procedures and performance management ensure all staff are aware of the importance attached to making the curriculum accessible to all pupils.

Curriculum specialisms will also be used to develop and highlight the different learning styles of the school's learners. Access to the curriculum covers not only teaching and learning, but also the wider curriculum such as after school activities, leisure, sporting and cultural activities or school visits.

Appropriate steps are taken to ensure that lessons are organised in ways, which offer the best possible opportunities for successful participation by disabled pupils.

Appropriate support will be offered to any disabled pupil to enable them to participate in internal assessment and examination arrangements. All pupils are assessed prior to taking external examinations or assessments and access arrangements are put in place following approval by the relevant examination board.

Where possible, the school will take appropriate steps to provide a pupil who becomes disabled the opportunity to remain at the school, through the provision of the same level of adaptation and support as a comparable pupil who is disabled at the start of their school career.

### **3. Health and Safety**

The Sunflower Federation will ensure that all pupils, including pupils with a disability, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other Health and Safety issues within the Schools that affect them.

## **ACCESSIBILITY FOR STAFF**

### **1. Employments**

The Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful for the Schools, and therefore, any of its employees to discriminate in the field of employment, against a disabled person for a reason that relates to the persons disability, if that treatment cannot be justified.

This applies not only to requirements, but to all areas of employment including the terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies.

Wherever practicable, the federation will seek to:

- Employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Ensure that disabled employees are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed term contracts is being considered
- This applies not only to requirements, but to all areas of employment including the terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies.

### **2. Recruitment**

All candidates will be assessed on their abilities, qualifications and experience in relation to the job description and person specification for an advertised post. It may be that a reasonable adjustment would be required to allow a disabled candidate to meet the requirements of a post and the school would seek to facilitate this if required. For example, a candidate would not be rejected simply on the basis that they cannot gain access to the building. Most arrangements to accommodate disabled employees can be made within existing resource constraints or at minimal cost. It should, therefore, not be assumed that employing disabled people will cause problems or generate significant additional cost.

### **3. Support of Employment**

Some disabled people may require additional support when settling into their working environment. In particular, consideration will be given to any adaptation, for example, the provision of equipment or the modification of the working environment, which may be necessary to enable the individual to work on equal terms with non-disabled colleagues. The additional support required will initially be assessed by a member of the Medical and Accessibility Team and reviewed periodically by the team as a whole.

Any necessary modifications should ideally be agreed and carried out before the individual commences work. Some of the adjustments may have implications for other staff and it is

important that they are consulted about proposed changes. Consideration should also be given to parking facilities, toilet facilities and health and safety issues such as evacuation procedures.

#### **4. Confidentiality**

Where a disability is not obvious, the individual should be asked if they wish their colleagues to be informed of their disability. Whenever possible, their wishes in this regard will be respected. In certain cases, it may be appropriate for some colleagues to be aware of the disability in order to be able to respond appropriately in cases of emergency.

#### **5. Training**

Training will be made available to disabled people on the same basis as their colleagues. Where special arrangements are required, for example, accessible training accommodation or large print handouts, this should be put in place.

#### **6. Members of Staff who become disabled**

Losing the services of a member of staff who becomes disabled can deprive the Schools of a considerable asset in terms of the skills and experience of the individual as well as an investment in that individual's training and development. Where practicable the school will attempt to retain staff who become disabled and to ensure suitable employment for them. Senior members of staff should deal as sensitively as possible with these situations and seek help where required. Help should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status, financial loss and reduced self-esteem.

The school is required by law to make reasonable adjustments to enable the individual to continue in post. There are a number of possible options to consider:

- Continuing in the same post – Where the disability has occurred as the result of an accident, for example, the individual has been absent from work for some time, the school will be flexible and sensitive in assisting staff to return to work.
- In circumstances where it is envisaged that some difficulties may be encountered the school will consider a phased return to work or a permanent reduction in hours until confidence and ability are fully restored.
- Redeployment – Where it is not practicable for the individual to continue in their former post, the school will attempt to redeploy the individual into a suitable alternative post. The individual's qualifications and skills as well as their own preferences in terms of type of work should be taken into account when trying to identify a suitable vacancy.
- Premature retirement on grounds of incapacity – Where it has been decided that redeployment is impracticable, the member of staff may be considered for retirement on the grounds of medical incapacity under the normal terms of the appropriate procedure.
- Termination of employment - If all other options have been explored and found to be impracticable, dismissal on grounds of incapacity should be considered. If it proves to be necessary, termination will be in accordance with the appropriate procedures, which include a right of appeal.

In some cases, the disability will be a progressive condition, which will develop over time and a number of the options could therefore be appropriate at different stages.

## **7. Health and Safety**

The Sunflower Federation will ensure that all staff, including those with a disability, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other Health and Safety issues within the Schools that affect them.

## **ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT**

### **1. Physical Environment**

The Sunflower Federation Schools will take account of the needs of pupils, staff, parents and community users with physical difficulties, sensory impairment, learning disabilities and medical needs when planning and undertaking future building projects and refurbishments of the site and premises.

Where possible, the School will aim to ensure that disabled pupils have equal access to all pupil facilities. While it is recognised that some of these facilities are located in buildings which have restrictive access, the school will ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to meet the needs of a disabled pupil. When appropriate, for a pupil with a significant mobility difficulty, the school will create and keep under review his/her Moving and Handling Risk Assessment.

All new school buildings have to comply with Building regulations and the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999. Building work could entail improvements to premises access, lighting, acoustics, decoration schemes, and climate control, as well as specialized areas like disabled access toilets, sensory facilities, changing areas with hoists, and a Hydrotherapy Pool. ICT needs to be integrated into classrooms as an aid to curriculum delivery and pupil assessment.

### **2. Provision of Information**

The Sunflower Federation Schools will take account of the communication needs of its pupils, parents, staff, visitors and community and will utilize a variety of communication formats and media like its website and use of sign language.

It will also make itself aware of local services provided through the Local Authority and RNIB (Royal National Institute for Blind People) for translation and communication in alternative formats, as and when required or requested. The school uses translator's services to facilitate EHCP meetings and to translate to documents.

### **3. Visitors and external groups**

When the federation school organises events that are attended by visitors to the school and it will ensure that all buildings used for such an event are appropriately accessible. Information for emergency and evacuation procedures will be provided.

### **4. Lettings**

If the federation school enters into a contract for hire with an external person or group, it will aim to make all possible reasonable adjustments to enable accessibility. However it is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that the part of the premises used meets the needs of their group and inform about evacuation procedures.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All School staff are expected to be aware of this policy and to treat disabled people, whether pupils, staff, visitors or members of the public in accordance with these provisions.

The leadership of the Sunflower Federation and its Governors are responsible for ensuring that no pupil or staff member is treated less favourably on account of any disability and that all reasonable adjustments are made. They

- carry out routine inspections and maintain entrances
- address any issues that have arisen regarding accessibility
- maintain and review the school's Accessibility Plan

### **Linked Policies and Plans**

The Sunflower Federation's Accessibility Plans will contribute to the review, revision and implementation of related school policies, e.g.

- Asset Management Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- School Improvement Plan including staff development
- SEN policy
- Equality policy
- Curriculum policies
- Data Protection policy

## ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLANS

Accessibility Action Plan is part of the Sunflower Federations SIP and Asset Management Plans for Breakspeare and Meadow Wood Schools

### Aims

- a. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability.
- b. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment.

### BREAKSPEARE SCHOOL

Objectives	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
<b>a. Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability.</b>				
Successful planning of a new school that enhances learning of all students	HCC led project work Stakeholder engagement Internal planning group	2023-25	HT RFM	A new Breakspeare School site that is purposeful for teaching and learning
<b>b. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment.</b>				
Ensure functionality and safety of the current building	Asset management and budget planning and implementation	2023-25	HT RFM HS-link gov	Safe and well-maintained school environment

### MEADOW WOOD SCHOOL

Objectives	Strategies	Timescale	Responsibility	Success Criteria
<b>Increase access to the curriculum for pupils with a disability.</b>				
Ensure a physically stimulating, accessible and safe outdoor and indoor learning environment for the students.	Working party Asset management and budget planning and implementation	2023-25	TEACHERS DH RMH TL-link gov	Stimulating and updated learning environment in use.
<b>a. Improve and maintain access to the physical environment.</b>				
Refurbish toilet area between Rabbits and Owls	Asset management and budget planning and implementation	2023-25	HT RFM HS-link gov	Improved personal care facilities Improved working environment
Redesign MOVE-room	Asset management and budget planning and implementation	2023-24	HT RFM HS-link gov	Improved working environment Improved access to the building