

# EQUALITY AND DISABILITY STATEMENT

## School Commitment to Equality

At Annan School our values reflect our commitment to a school where there are high expectations of everyone. Children are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child attains and achieves all that they are able to. Everyone in our school is important and included. We promote an ethos of care and trust where every member of our school community feels that they truly belong and are valued. We recognise learning in all its forms and are committed to nurturing lifelong learners. We are a safe school, committed to improving children's confidence and self-esteem. We know that safe and happy children will achieve their potential.

## The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act came into force in October 2010, bringing together different laws that cover discrimination into one.

## Who is covered by the Equality Act

A person is covered by the Act if they have one or more of the 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Act.

## Protected Characteristics in a school

- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

## Responsibilities

- The Principals, headteachers and staff recognise their responsibilities under the Equality Act to eliminate discrimination.
- The Principals are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities and for implementing the Equality Policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, are given appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any case of unlawful discrimination.

## Policy and planning

Equality of opportunity will be considered whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

## Annan School will:

- promote equality of opportunity and positive attitudes towards all children, staff and other people if they have one or more of the 'protected characteristics' as defined by the Act;
- eliminate discrimination that is defined by the Equality Act 2010;

- eliminate harassment of children, staff and other people that is related to their disability or diversity;
- promote positive attitudes towards disability and diversity;
- endeavour to make the school a welcoming place for all ethnic and national groups represented in the community;
- ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone to achieve.
- encourage participation by disabled children in all aspects of school life;
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment;
- make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children are not disadvantaged compared to their peers;
- have due regard to disabled children's progress.

## **Disability Statement**

Under the Equalities Act a disability is defined as:

***'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'***

The definition is designed to be as broad as possible and there are a wide variety of conditions and impairments covered.

Some impairments automatically meet the definition from the point of diagnosis, such as cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis. People registered as blind or partially sighted are also automatically regarded as disabled under the Act.

If a person meets this definition they will be protected if someone discriminates against them because of their impairment.

There is no need for a medically diagnosed cause for the impairment; what matters is the long-term adverse effect of the impairment on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **Reasonable adjustment**

Under the school's duty to comply with the Act, and to meet its aspirations as an inclusive school, the school will make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure disabled children are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.

The Equality Act does not say what is 'reasonable'. What is reasonable in one set of circumstances may not be reasonable in another.

Reasonable adjustment may relate to a physical adjustment such as rearranging the furniture of a room to accommodate a child who is partially sighted. Or it may relate to the provision of material or aids such as a physio cushion for a child with sensory needs. Additionally, it could include making adjustments to class organisation to allow a child to be in an environment more suited to their ability or developmental needs.

The following factors are likely to be taken into account when considering whether adjustments are reasonable:

- The effectiveness of making the adjustment. Will it be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by the disabled child?
- The practicality of the adjustment;
- The financial resources of the school;
- The cost of making the adjustment;
- The availability of grants, loans and other assistance to disabled children, such as DSAs, local authority funding;
- The extent to which aids and services will be provided to disabled children from other sources;
- Health and safety requirement;
- The relevant interests of other children – for example if the adjustment results in significant disadvantage for other children.

## **Employment**

The school recognises its duty not to discriminate against job applicants or employees. All areas of employment are covered including:

- recruitment and advertising
- employment contracts
- pay and benefits
- promotion and training
- dismissal and redundancy

The school will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment set out in our staff recruitment policy.

## **Complaints or failure to comply**

Complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's Equality Policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the disciplinary or grievance procedure as appropriate). All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously as such behaviour is unacceptable.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's Policy Review cycle and in the light of any changes to the Equality Act 2010 or other legislation or statutory guidance.