



Woodside Baptist Church Disability Policy

1. Background

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) reminds us that we should be good neighbours to all and especially to our fellow Christians (Gal 6:10).

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it our duty to treat everyone with disabilities of all kinds without discrimination, but as the Lord's followers we would want to do that anyway. As a Church we are committed to make all reasonable provisions and adjustments that we can to help those with various disabilities to enjoy the same things that the more able bodied of us do.

2. Attitude

Our outlook is one of inclusiveness. We want people to be able to worship and learn with us and will do what we can to remove barriers to their doing so. A duty of our Health and Safety officer is to keep a watching brief for the unwitting introduction of facilities or activities that bar the disabled from inclusion.

This policy identifies various types of disability and outlines the provisions currently made, or to be made to accommodate them. The order is alphabetical and does not indicate how seriously we view the disability.

3. Blindness or visual impairment.

- We provide large print songbooks to help those with visual impairment. The stewards have these and give them out on request. Some large-print Bibles are available. We would consider providing song books in Braille if we had a totally blind person worshiping with us.
- White lines are painted onto the front edge of steps.
- Guide dogs are permitted onto any part of the premises.

4. Deafness & Hearing Impairment

- There is a loop system in the church to help those with hearing difficulties. Notices indicating this are displayed at the main entrances.
- Most Sunday mornings a British Sign Language interpreter is available.

5. Mental Health, Learning Difficulties/Disabilities.

People worship with us who have

- problems related to mental illness,
- conditions related to the autistic spectrum
- Down's and other congenital syndromes.
- Epileptic and similar neurological conditions

There is no requirement for these friends to sit in any particular place during meetings.

If required, where children in these categories are involved, efforts will be made to provide one-to-one assistance during Sunday Club.

5.1 People in distress

People in considerable distress frequently come to our services. A prayer ministry team is available to assist. When the distress is due to bereavement or other losses, the Woodside Bereavement Service, although independent of the Church, is a suitable organisation for counselling to which we may refer both adults and children.

6. Mobility

- By prior arrangement convenient parking areas will be reserved in the car park to assist disabled people whether driving themselves or being collected by other members.
- All access doors to the buildings have at least one that is wide enough for a wheelchair.
- All church buildings are accessible without the need to negotiate steps.
- One accessible toilet is to be made available.
- Because moveable chairs are used for all meetings, space will be cleared to accommodate wheelchairs. The aisles are left sufficiently wide to let wheelchairs through.
- Stewards are available to open doors to let wheelchairs through.
- There is reasonably secure parking for a battery driven scooter in the Library.

7. Long term illnesses

- We provide a tape/CD service for those who are "house-bound".
- Toilets are close to meeting rooms
- Gluten free wafers are provided at communion for those with coeliac disease.

8. Personal disfigurement

- People do attend our services with a noticeable disfigurement of some kind such as severe birthmarks, surgical scars, illness producing facial abnormalities and so on. These problems are not in themselves a

disability but these friends often feel rejected and embarrassed. When they do attend they will be treated in exactly the same way as everyone else. They are free to sit wherever they feel most comfortable and no discrimination will be tolerated.

Adopted 26th November 2007