



THE BISHOP STRACHAN SCHOOL

# ACCESSIBILITY POLICY FOR THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

The Bishop Strachan School (“BSS”) is committed to providing excellent customer service in a manner that, as much as reasonably possible, respects an individual’s dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity, including, for those with disabilities. In its ongoing efforts to strive for accessibility, the School endorses the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the regulations supporting this Act.

## APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and agents of the BSS who interact with our customers, be they current and prospective students, current, prospective and past parents/grandparents, alumnae, donors and other users of our services.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the practices and procedures approved by BSS in order to meet the obligations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and specifically the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Regulation 429/07. BSS, through this policy, establishes and implements practices and procedures consistent with its goal of compliance, as well as its commitment to excellent customer service for all.

This policy aims to ensure that people with disabilities, visible or invisible, are given the same opportunity as others to obtain and benefit from services offered by BSS. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that services offered by BSS are provided in such a way that the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities are respected in the following areas:

## **COMMUNICATION**

BSS will communicate to people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train our staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with people with disabilities.

We will train our staff and volunteers to communicate over the telephone in plain language and to speak clearly.

## **ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

BSS is committed to service people with diverse disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services.

We will ensure that our employees and volunteers are aware of the various assistive devices provided by BSS, for customers with disabilities while accessing our services.

## **BILLING**

BSS is committed to providing accessible invoices to all our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in alternative formats upon request.

## **USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS**

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, BSS will ensure that the person is permitted to enter the School premises and to keep the animal with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. While visiting BSS, it is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times.

If the service animal is excluded by law from BSS premises, BSS will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the School's services.

In the event a staff member or student is allergic to the service animal, alternative arrangements will be negotiated.

## **USE OF SUPPORT PERSON**

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, BSS will ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the School premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

BSS may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on School premises, in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability, or the health and safety of others on the School premises.

Consent from the person with a disability is required when communicating private issues related to the person with a disability, in the presence of a support person.

For those School events where admission fees apply, these fees will be waived for support persons. BSS will ensure that notice is given in advance of relevant events or activities that admission fees will be waived for support persons.

## **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

BSS will make reasonable effort to provide customers with notice in the event of a disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about

the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. We will not be able to give adequate notice in case of an emergency temporary disruption.

In order to make information accessible, signs and printed notices of sufficient size that are easily readable will be prepared.

The signs and printed notices will be displayed prominently at the entrance to the School, on notice-boards and at service desks.

Telephone messages will be left in clear and concise language.

## **TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

BSS will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation. Training will be provided to new BSS employees as part of orientation training for new employees. Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to person with disabilities.

BSS will ensure that the following persons receive training about the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities:

1. Every person who deals with members of the public or third parties on behalf of BSS, whether the person does so as an employee, volunteer or otherwise; and
2. Every person who participates in developing BSS's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of public.

The training will include a review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation.

The amount and format of training will depend on the person's interaction with customers.

A record of training received by staff and volunteers will be kept in the BSS Human Resources Department.

## **FEEDBACK PROCESS**

BSS welcomes feedback, including feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. Users can submit feedback to the BSS Human Resources Department. Alternatively, users can submit feedback to any school employee, and it will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework through which BSS can achieve service excellence for people with disabilities. If anyone has questions about this policy, please contact: the Head of School or the BSS Human Resources Department.

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