

Becoming a Welcoming Place for Disabled People

Welcoming is an important Christian ministry in a world where disabled people often find a lack on inclusion. A warm welcome embodies the Christian message.

NEVER ASSUME ANYTHING; ALWAYS ASK THE DISABLED PERSON

- Speak directly to the disabled person, not to someone with them.
- Introduce yourself by name as one of the welcome team.
- Offer to help; don't be offended by refusal, or help without asking.
- Reserve your own accessible bays for Blue Badge holders
- Reserve seats (with arms if possible) by the entrance for people who can't walk far.
- If there is a queuing system, please be aware that some people may have difficulty standing and may need to 'jump the queue'.
- Enable disabled people to sit where and with whom they wish.
- Ask people whether they would like assistance. Remember – not every disability is visible.
- Ensure people know where the toilets are and don't need to ask.
- Stand in good light for lip-readers and partially sighted people.
- Give eye contact where possible, although be aware that for some people eye contact is not possible, or will be avoided.
- Be patient – some people take longer to respond, especially if they have difficulty speaking.
- Give help discreetly. Don't make the person feel conspicuous.
- For visually impaired people, offer assistance in finding a place to sit and introducing them to neighbours.
- Don't guide a visually impaired person from behind – let them take your arm.
- Offer visually impaired people large print / braille literature.
- Don't hurry a speech impaired person, be relaxed and positive.

- Don't finish people's sentences.
- Speak clearly, not loudly to hearing impaired people.
- Ensure your face and mouth can be clearly seen.
- Look at hearing impaired people directly and speak normally.
- Shouting or exaggerating speech is not helpful to lip-readers.
- Don't lean on a wheelchair or move it unless the user ask you. Sit down to talk at eye-level if possible.
- Try to ensure a wheelchair user can sit where they wish and with whom they wish.
- If people block a wheelchair user's view, politely ask them to sit down.
- Use plain, not childish language with learning disabled people.

Don't assume. Always ask.



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