

School Accessibility Policy

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

"A person has 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."

The **SEN and Disability Act** (2001) extended the **Disability Discrimination Act** (1995) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under Part 4 of the DDA:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This duty requires schools to produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the schools intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas, is published and evaluated annually.

The three areas include:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

In addition, the **Disability Equality Duty** (2006) requires all schools to:

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA.
- Eliminate harassment of those with a disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons.
- Encourage participation by disabled individuals.

Take steps to take account of disabilities even if this involves treating disabled persons more favourably.

This Disability Equality Duty requires schools to:

- Involve those with a disability in producing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan.
- Publish the DES/Action Plan.
- Demonstrate they have taken action identified to achieve outcomes.
- Report on progress, review and revise the DES annually

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**, as amended by the **SEN and Disability Act 2001** (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in "Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils", issued by DfES in July 2002.

At all times the School will also be equally aware of the needs of disabled staff, parents and visitors.

Key Objectives

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils and prospective pupils with a disability.

- To provide a caring and friendly environment.
- To provide resources to cater for the needs of the individual students.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the school and an awareness of the needs of students with a disability.

Principles

Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the school's aims, equal opportunities policy, and the operation of the school's SEN policy;

- ★ *The school recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):*
- ★ *not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services*
- ★ *not to treat disabled pupils less favourably or to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage*
- ★ *to publish an Accessibility Plan.*

In performing their duties, governors and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002);

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 a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

All staff will be able to meet more fully the needs of disabled students with regards to accessing the curriculum.

Activity

a) Education & related activities

The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEN inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts etc.

Within the curriculum, the School aims to provide a full access to all elements. Specifically, in all areas of Information & Communication Technology, the School will have consideration in planning facilities for:-

- Wheelchair access
- Screen reader software
- Screen magnifier software for the visually impaired
- Features such as sticky keys and filter keys to aid disabled users in using a keyboard o
- Screen Magnifier Software.

To develop communication skills in students, enabling them to express thoughts and opinions successfully through speech, writing and sign language as appropriate.

To give advice and support in curriculum subjects as appropriate, to enable disabled students to participate successfully in lessons within the mainstream school.

To ensure that the needs of all disabled students and staff are represented within the school.

To create positive images of disability within the school so that students grow into adults who have some understanding of the needs of disabled people.

b) Physical environment

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

c) Provision of information

The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested etc.