

# Disability Equality Scheme

## Newport Infant School

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## **Foreword**

Newport Infant School's mission statement says 'We will be proud of all our children and the valuable contribution they make.' Valuing diversity is central to achieving this overall aim of the school. We are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school.

Newport Infant School is therefore pleased to publish its second Disability Equality Scheme. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing this scheme and we hope we can continue to work together with disabled people to achieve disability equality in our school.

## **Introduction**

### **The Disability Equality Duty**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 established a new Disability Equality Duty for the public sector. This new legal duty requires organisations across the public sector to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated equally. This duty contains two elements - a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specific public authorities, including maintained schools.

This scheme builds on our accessibility plan and develops the work further to include

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational needs and applies to all vulnerable groups.
- Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments.
- Work with pupils, staff and parents/carers, involving their views to identify priority actions within the school improvement plan.

### **The General Duty**

The general duty requires that all public authorities, when carrying out their functions should:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation in public life by disabled people
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

### **The Specific Duty**

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to:

- Produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) setting out how it will fulfil its general and specific duties
- Involve disabled people in the development of the scheme
- Include a three year action plan to be reviewed annually

## **The Definition of Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes or epilepsy.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

At the time of writing our school has one child with Downs Syndrome, one who uses Makaton, one with brittle bones and 2 with epilepsy.

## **Discrimination disabled people face**

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of ways. These include:

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information
- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people

## **Action to date**

Our DES is a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people in Newport Infant School. The scheme builds on what we have done already to promote equality for disabled people.

For example we have adopted:

- An Accessibility Plan which aims to
  - Improve access and facilities to the school site for pupils and parents who have physical disabilities
  - raise CPD training needs CPD needs for SEN and their awareness of DDA
  - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
  - Improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils and their parents

- A Single Equalities Scheme (Gender equality, race equality and equal opportunities) which aims to
  - Ensure all children are equally valued, respected and cared for
  - Ensure all pupils have access to a full range of activities and experiences in all curriculum areas
  - Ensure all children have opportunities to develop their potential
  
- A Special Needs Policy which aims to
  - Give each child full access to a broad, balanced, relevant education
  - Enhance the development of each individual child
  - Support children with educational needs with individual learning and/or behaviour programmes and where appropriate additional resources and/or support assistance
  - Ensure close co-ordination and co-operation between staff and other professional agencies in order to fulfil our responsibilities towards the individual child

## **Background Information**

### **Involvement of disabled people in developing the scheme**

In developing this scheme we have consulted with

- Disabled pupils
- Non disabled parents of disabled children

We asked for their views on the schools provision for them and whether they feel our ethos promotes inclusion and equality. Their answers to our questions prompted points on the action plan.

(See Appendix 2, Questions to Parents/Carers of disabled pupils)

We plan further consultation with disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality over the next three years via:

- Focus groups
- Questionnaires

### **Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers**

All the parents of disabled pupils that were interviewed and consulted in the writing of this scheme felt that their children were actively encouraged to participate in school life. All had taken part in Sports day, class assemblies and shows. Parent and pupil's views are always sought as part of the annual review process for children with statements.

### **The Governing Body**

The election of parent governors is covered by the DDA 2005, and governors will need to ensure that the procedures for candidates to stand for election and for parents to vote for candidates are accessible to disabled people. However, the result of the election is not covered and disabled candidates will not be able to claim that they were not elected simply because they were disabled. Once a disabled parent governor is elected, the school governing body functions in relation to that parent are covered and the school must ensure that they can participate fully in school life.

### **School Facility Lettings**

Schools have additional implications as service providers to make their buildings accessible when they hire out rooms or parts of the building. Newport Infant School has a purpose built Children's Centre, this is used by the community and has full disabled access including a disabled toilet and disabled parking. The school has its own disabled badge for parking which prioritises the children's needs. The new build has Braille signs on all doors and our action plan will look at the need to continue this throughout the building.

### **Impact Assessment**

Newport Infant School recognises the importance of assessing the impact of its current policies and practices on disability equality, in order that they do not have an adverse impact on its disabled stakeholders and to inform future planning.

In developing this scheme, along with our Accessibility plan and Single Equalities Scheme we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving disability equality and tackling discrimination. Promoting disability equality in Newport Infant School will be a continuous process so this scheme will be regularly monitored, reviewed and developed so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Disability Discrimination Act.

## **Action Plans for improving Disability Equality**

### **Access to the curriculum**

- To review and assess CPD needs of staff for SEN and their awareness of the DDA\*
- To assess whether all the school policies including that of teaching and learning have statements on inclusion\*
- Monitor ECM (every child matters) weeks to ensure they are inclusive and promote positive awareness of disability.

### **Participation and engagement**

- Ensure the Governing body is aware of its statutory responsibility to promote disability equality
- Review the Single Equalities Scheme
- Monitor the use of the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability. Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials.

### **Employment**

- Monitor the staff who count as disabled people under DDA 2005 (including numbers, type of disability and satisfaction rates in staff surveys etc.)

### **Access to information and services**

- To assess the need for Braille signs throughout building\*
- To assess the need for the fire alarms to have a light warning system\*
- Assess the need for alternative formats of the school information pack, i.e. Braille, audio, modified large print

### **Physical access**

- To ensure the existing facilities e.g. handrails, ramps, disabled toilets are maintained and assessed for suitability to new entrants\*
- To continue to liaise with external agencies to access equipment and meet the needs of any disabled child or adult when necessary\*

For further information on these actions, such as, persons responsible, resources needed and review dates please see Appendix 1, DES Action Plan 2007.

\* These actions are on the Accessibility Action Plan found with the Accessibility plan (2007-2009)

## **Making it Happen**

### **Implementation**

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the school's vision backed up by key actions, which will be carried out within the next three years. (See Appendix 1, DES Action Plan 2010-2013)

This action plan will be reviewed and evaluated annually by the senior management team and governing body to show:

- What progress has been made in terms of implementing the action plan
- The impact of the actions taken
- Actions which still need to be taken

### **Reporting**

There will be an annual report on this scheme demonstrating the above findings and including information gathered during the year. This report will be published as follows

- On the school's website
- Be available to all school members in hard copy, and in the form of alternative communication where necessary

### **Monitoring**

The effectiveness of this Disability Equality Scheme will be evaluated with the school improvement partner and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

# Appendix 1

## DES Action Plan

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Person/group responsible</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Review date</b>
Ensure Governing body is aware of its statutory responsibility to promote disability equality.	Governing Body	Annual report on DES	Annually
Review Single Equalities Scheme	Senior management team & link governor		Autumn 2016
Monitor and improve the use of the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability. Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials.	Senior management leading to all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning walks</li> <li>• Purchase of appropriate material</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Monitor the staff that count as disabled under DDA 2005 (satisfaction rates in stress surveys etc)	Senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff surveys</li> </ul>	Autumn 2016

<p>Assess the need for alternative formats of the school information pack, i.e. Braille, audio, modified large print.</p>	<p>Head teacher and governing body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative formats if required.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing. Annual review of info pack.</p>
<p>Continue to consult with disabled parents, pupils and staff to determine their priorities for the school regarding disability equality.</p>	<p>Senior Management, Governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Organise focus groups</li> <li>• School Council meetings.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing. Review Autumn 2016</p>
<p>Monitor ECM (every child matters) weeks to ensure they are inclusive and promote positive awareness of disability.</p>	<p>Senior management and Governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning for weeks</li> </ul>	<p>Annual</p>

## Appendix 2

### DES Newport Infant School

#### The General Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a **general duty** on schools.

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
- Eliminating harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and applies to all disabled pupils, staff and those using services provided by the school.

#### Questions to parents/carers of disabled pupils

How was information collected on your child's disability, was this information used to improve the provision of services?

Is pupil achievement monitored by disability?

Are disabled pupils encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?

Is bullying and harassment of disabled pupils monitored? Have you had any issues?

Is disability portrayed positively in school books, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?

Does the school take part in annual events such as Deaf Awareness Week to raise awareness of disability? Do you think it should/have any ideas?

Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events, which parents or carers attend, held in an accessible part of the school?

Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats that are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?