



DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

"Building a life-long love of learning in a safe and happy school"

1. Purpose

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requires all public authorities, to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme. The scheme supports all matters of our policy in ensuring inclusive practice that allows full access and involvement of our whole school community.

2. School Values

Loughton Manor First School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

3. Our Commitment

- This school will not tolerate discrimination or harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.
- Our scheme will also consider carers of disabled relatives.
- Further details of how our commitment is enacted can be found in the following school policies:
 - Equal Opportunities
 - Inclusion
 - Curriculum
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Daily Organisation

3.1 What do we understand by "disability"?

"Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

(DDA 1995 Part 1 para 1.1) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:-

- People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis.

- For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.

The Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

3.2. Schools Strategic Priorities

The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

Our vision statement says '*Building a life-long love of learning in a safe and happy school*'. Disabled children need to be supported to ensure they have **all** the opportunities that other children have.

The School has the following priorities to ensure our school aims support the development of the values that inform the plan:

- Help all disabled children to become confident, happy, well motivated, independent and responsible members of the community.
- Deliver an inclusive, creative and challenging curriculum where achievements are celebrated to all children.

3.3 Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths

- Staff commitment to promoting equality
- Caring attitude of staff and children.
- Good communication between staff/staff and parents on concerns for children.
- Single level throughout building
- Main entrance can be accessed with minimum difficulties.
- FS has good disabled access.
- KS1 has good disabled access.
- Main entrance and hall has good disabled access.
- All areas of the curriculum currently can be accessed by all abilities of children.
- Equality is promoted throughout the curriculum.
- Availability of laptops allows all children good access to ICT from anywhere in the building.

Weaknesses

Various weaknesses with the current building including:

- No specific infant sized disabled toilet – currently adult size
- Heavy doors that cannot be opened independently by a wheelchair user, or someone with a disability that impairs their strength of arm

- Noise carrying from shared areas to classrooms

4. The General Duty

We will actively seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons.
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act.
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities.
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons – this means not representing people in a demeaning way, and it also means not pretending they don't exist and not representing them anywhere at all.
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life – it is also important to respect the wishes of disabled children in an educational setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in.
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.
(DDA 2005 S.49A)

5. How we will meet the General Duty & Specific Duty

The production of this disability equality scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty of producing a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

5.1 Disability Discrimination Act focus areas

1. increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
2. improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
3. improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in written form, and where necessary providing alternative communication to written information

- 5.2** The school's focus is on including measures to increase participation in all aspects of school life e.g. directly asking pupils with a disability to be on the school council. Specific actions will also depend on the feedback from our consultation (see below, section 7), and may include strategies to promote accessibility and make the environment more disabled friendly, such as creating a quiet place, improving signage, etc.

We work hard to be alert and aware in recognising the range of barriers and potential discrimination faced by pupils with a disability. We are proactive in doing that bit extra to tackle these. We also ensure we include pupils by asking them what they want on an ongoing basis.

We ensure that children with disabilities can participate in lunchtime activities, school plays and school trips. We assess factors such as whether children are able to participate in all aspects of school life and how well children are achieving socially and academically, and then personalise support to ensure access.

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

Following our survey and initial meeting to solicit view of disabled pupils, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use school facilities, a representative group including pupils and parents/carers will continue to be invited to participate in review meetings and transition planning.

We encourage disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers to participate in school life, including involvement in the development and monitoring of both the scheme and the action plan.

The mechanism for this will be via the Governing Body's Environment Committee, working with the Inclusion Manager and the representative group described above.

5.4 The Governing Body

All governing body proceedings are accessible. We encourage all types of parents/carers/community members to become governors, including those with disabilities or whose family members have disabilities.

5.5 Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning

In our annual September staff inset, we ensure that an agenda item is dedicated to disability in the curriculum. This centres around not only developing positive attitudes, but also addresses effective teaching and learning for disabled people. This is customised to the pupil population at the time, to ensure that we focus upon 'real' as well as potential disabilities.

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Appendix 1 - Process

Annually in September:

Staff inset session to specifically focus upon disability in the curriculum. This will be done with the following agenda:

- Review of current disabilities represented in the school community
- Curricular opportunities a) for promoting disability equality, and b) for ensuring barriers to participation are removed
- Updating and reviewing any action plans, and putting in place arrangements for any specific staff training to meet individual pupils' needs

Annually in the Spring Term:

Governors' Environment Committee to be preceded by a stakeholder meeting to ensure views are considered and issues addressed.

As part of Policy Reviews

As each relevant policy comes up for revision, ensure that consideration of the school's Disability Equality Scheme is included and noted as a revision:

Key Policies are:

- Equal Opportunities
- Inclusion
- Curriculum
- Foundation Stage
- Transition
- Daily Organisation
- Accessibility Plan

but it may be that other policies are also considered relevant.

Staff awareness of our Disability Equality Scheme values and duties will support the ongoing commitment to consider disability equality as a priority.

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Appendix 2

Initial Stakeholder Consultation – March 1st 2010

What are the biggest barriers to you in coming to, and getting around, school?

- transport to and from school; parking

Ongoing issue re people parking on crossing – is difficult for wheelchair users and makes sightlines difficult (an issue for HI), coming off a coach arrival area on return to school.

- access to buildings

Heavy doors are difficult for those with mobility problems. Decking's non-slip surface needs renewing.

- written information or communication

Some people might need large print – newsletter and induction. Making sure appropriate colours are used – e.g. Powerpoint presentations.

- verbal or audible information/communication

Home visit – be explicit around communication needs.

- people's attitudes to you because of your impairment, medical condition or disability

Keeping everyone well informed about individual needs and how they present so that they can be appropriately supportive.

- access to extended school's activities

Publish (adjustments) info re needs for seating arrangements.

- access to whole school activities such as assemblies

Ensuring awareness and that all are encouraged.

- lack of reasonable adjustments

Acoustics around the building is an issue. Pursuing the idea of sliding doors as a priority

- policies or procedures such as the fire evacuation procedure

Helping in Schools leaflet needs a new para to encourage helpers with disabilities.

- other barriers (for pupils this could include things such as 'carrying heavy objects like a full schoolbag' and 'getting ready for P.E.')

Pupils' cloakrooms are a problem with lots of items left (dropped on the floor). Look for how to improve this.

