

St Mark's C of E Aided Primary School

Disability Equality Scheme

Mission Statement

At St Mark's, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. The achievement of disabled pupils and students will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (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'.

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.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on schools, who need to have due regard for the following when carrying out their functions:

- 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 schools.

Monitoring

To meet the Disability Equality Duty, it is essential that aspects of school life are monitored to identify whether there is an adverse impact on children and young people with disabilities. The following should be monitored:

- Achievement of disabled pupils
- Disabled staff (including numbers, type of disability and a satisfaction question to be included in performance management reviews etc.)

Additional Implications for Schools

The role of a school as a service provider

Schools have additional implications as a service provider to make their buildings accessible when they hire out rooms or parts of the building.

Contact with parents and carers

When providing newsletters and information for parents and carers, schools should make this information available in an accessible format so that parents or carers who may be, for example, visually impaired, can access the information.

Additionally, events for parents and carers such as open evenings, meetings with teachers, should be held in accessible parts of the building.

Hiring transport

School staff will need to be aware of Section 6 of the Act when hiring transport as it puts new duties on transport providers, including the bus and coach companies, and the taxi and private hire car trade. The requirement to provide accessible vehicles is extended to include these transport providers. Bus companies will not be able to refuse a job because, for example, it may take longer to pick up disabled students.

Election of parent governors

The election of parent governors will now be 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.

Appendix A - Accessibility Plan

The following plan outlines what will be achieved in accordance with the stated time frames with regards to meeting the Disability Equality Duty.

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
2012-13							
Improving the Environment	Ensuring accessibility of school buildings and grounds	<p>Finance & Environment Committee to undertake a review of current access to the school buildings and grounds, with a view to identifying areas requiring improvement</p> <p>Create action plan to address any identified areas for improvement</p> <p>Re-run review of access</p>	<p>Review findings documented</p> <p>Action plan drafted</p> <p>Improvements implemented – feedback from stakeholders</p>	Annually	Chair of F&E	June 2012	May 2013

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
	Use the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability	Ensure that disability is represented in assemblies / displays / circle time / learning materials e.g. Deaf Awareness week / learning disability week	Monitoring pupil participation	Ongoing	Headteacher/ Senior Management	June 2012	Ongoing
	Increased awareness of duty on schools under DDA	Plan staff and governor training	Training completed	Annually	HT/Chair of Personnel Committee	Autumn 2012	Ongoing
Delivery of written information	Improve accessibility of provision of information in a range of formats for disabled families – large print / simpler language / audio tapes / Braille / website	Include statement about disability provision in our welcome pack/ website / prospectus / permanent newsletter footnote to be added	Positive feedback from parents Record of special provision requests	Admin office to monitor provision of newsletter / info boards / website as required	DHT	Summer 2012	On-going

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
Participation in school curriculum	Accessibility to curriculum	Subject leaders when reviewing medium term planning and class teachers when reviewing daily planning need to raise awareness of planned activities that may require modification or additional support in order for disabled pupils to participate fully.	Discussion at planning meetings SENCO to engage in pupil conferencing Target Tracking	Annual review	Curriculum managers / class teachers	Summer 2012	Ongoing

Appendix B

Check list for school staff and governors

- Is information collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is pupil achievement monitored by disability? Are there are trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- 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 and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- 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?
- 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 which are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?
- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?