

Disability Equality Policy

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the DDA 2005 require the governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and those who have hired school facilities; and
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties

Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the DDA 2005 apply to different aspects of the school's operation: to employment, to the provision of services and to education. The Disability Equality Duty brings together school's responsibilities under Parts 2, 3 and 4 and the school's scheme shows how the school is meeting its general duty to promote disability equality across all its areas of responsibility.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA 1995 require the governing body to plan (The Schools Accessibility Plan) to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

- 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

Definition

The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a **substantial and long-term adverse effect** on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Definition of the terms:

- 'physical impairment' includes sensory impairments
- 'mental impairment' includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness
- 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial' and
- 'long term' is defined as 12 months or more

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, hearing and visual impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- perception of risk of physical danger

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

1. The purpose and direction of the school's scheme

Erdington Academy aims to ensure that **all** students can access the curriculum and will take appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure equality of opportunity. The school encourages participation at every level and promotes positive attitudes from students, staff and parents. Students have a right to learn without fear of discrimination or harassment. In addition we would like to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for parents and staff who have a disability.

The 6 elements of the duty are:

- promoting equality of opportunity
- eliminating discrimination
- eliminating harassment
- promoting positive attitudes
- encouraging participation
- taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

1.2 Involvement with disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school

- The school will consider and review how to involve disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school
- The school will take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom they are consulting
- We will ensure that we will involve a range of people and hear a range of views
- The views of the disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school will be used to set priorities

1.3 Information gathering

The collection of information is crucial to supporting Erdington Academy in making decisions about what actions would best improve opportunities and outcomes for disabled pupils, staff and parents. Detailed information will be collected and collated and this will enable us to measure the delivery on disability equality and help us to review our provision. We will ensure that we assess the impact of the changes we will make to help us identify which of our priorities have been achieved.

Identifying disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school is key to the development of the DES.

INFORMATION TO BE GATHERED

- Recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.
- Education opportunities available to and achievement of disabled pupils
- Disabled parents, carers and other users of the school (All efforts to be made to collect information)
- We will make decisions on how the information is to be held in school and how it interlinks with other registers. Do we have just one school profile with differing levels of access? Confidentiality and need to know clauses required.

1.4 Impact assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed policies and practices in order to formally assess their impact on disabled people. Impact assessments will be an ongoing process to ensure that our policies and practices develop and evolve and will be incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of every policy. Every new policy or procedure will be drawn up with regard to our duty to promote disability equality.

The priorities for the Disability Equality Scheme action plan will be set in the light of

- an examination of the information that the school has gathered; and
- the messages that the school has heard from the disabled pupils, staff and parents who have been involved in the development of the scheme

Some of the priorities already identified:

- improving information to disabled parents, carers and students
- improving the involvement of disabled students, staff and parents
- improving access into school for disabled parents and carers

2. Making it happen

A working party will be established to collect information and implement our DES.

The working party membership to include:

- SLT member
- governor
- parent with disabled connections
- staff representative (with disability if possible)
- SENCO
- informed by associate members e.g. pupils with disability/on school council.

The Key Functions of the Working Party will be:

- To ensure the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents
- To arrange for the gathering of information
- To consider arrangements for impact assessment

2.1 Implementation

Our DES will incorporate the school's Accessibility Plan. We will evaluate our DES on an annual basis.

2.2 Reporting

We will report annually on the progress made on the action plan and its effect on policy and practice within the school.

2.3 Reviewing and revising the scheme

As part of the review of the scheme, we will:

- revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the scheme; and

- re-examine the information to see if actions that the school has taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for disabled pupils, staff and parents

The review of the scheme will inform its revision: how the school sets new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will continue to:

- involve disabled pupils, staff and parents; and
- be based on information that the school has gathered

The main documents that will inform the development of this scheme are:

- Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years setting, DFES
- Promoting Disability Equality in Schools, DCFS Guidance