

Hillside Junior School

Disability & Accessibility Equality Scheme



3-year period covered by this disability equality scheme:
2010-2013

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 sets out the following:

- a duty to promote disability equality
- a specific duty to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme

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 pupils with disabilities, under Part 4 of the DDA:

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

Both the disability equality scheme and the accessibility plan aim to detail how the Governing Body will meet the duties detailed above. It is a requirement that the school's disability equality scheme and accessibility plan are resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

Copies of the plans should be available from the school office and will be reported on annually.

1.1 The purpose and direction of the school's scheme

Vision and Values

Hillside Junior School is committed to the elimination of discrimination towards people with disabilities. It is recognised that although individuals may have physical impairments or learning impairments, the extent to which individuals are disabled by these can be affected by the physical environment and the learning environment in which they find themselves and the attitudes which they encounter. Therefore, as a school we are keen to take a proactive approach to ensuring that all members of our school community are enabled to participate in all aspects of school life. This will be achieved by ensuring that consideration of the needs of people with disabilities is embedded in all decision-making processes and activities within the school.

The vision for the school is that:

- Community members with disabilities will be free from discrimination and harassment
- There will be equality of opportunity between people who have disabilities and those who do not
- Positive attitudes towards community members with disabilities will be promoted

- The needs of community members with disabilities will be met and, where necessary, steps will be taken if more favourable treatment is required.

1.2 Involvement of pupils, staff and parents with disabilities

Hillside Junior School has consulted all stakeholders (pupils, parents, staff and governors) in the course of drawing up this plan and believe that it is vital that community members with disabilities have a voice in the decision-making process for all aspects of school life. The school, therefore, continues to look for ways to increase the involvement of stakeholders with disabilities. A previous member of the governing body who uses a wheelchair visited the school specifically to advise on accessibility issues. Where possible this advice has been incorporated into the accessibility plan.

Key Actions

It is proposed that a Parent's Council will be established and the participation of individuals with disabilities will be actively encouraged.

Ways of encouraging the representation of pupils with disabilities on the School Council to be considered. This could include co-option of some pupils with disabilities as council members.

1.3 Information Gathering

Hillside Junior School values diversity within its community and is keen to ensure that it is promoting disability equality. The school will therefore collect information on its pupils, staff, parents, carers, interview candidates and visitors to the school who have a disability, in order to inform its future access planning in terms of curriculum, physical environment and means of communication.

The school collects information on pupils by gender, disability, age, ethnicity and current achievement levels. For pupils this information is used to ensure that all pupils are achieving their potential in line with the outcomes for Every Child Matters. Information collection processes are established for all other members of the school community.

Key Actions

Devise a new application form for the school to include opportunities to record disabilities or impairments of pupils and/or parents and carers.

Ensure inclusive recruitment processes and procedures are in line with DDA and Equal Opportunities legislation.

Ensure that all visitors to the school are able to access facilities and events and all additional reasonable adjustments are made as necessary.

1.4 Impact Assessment

Hillside Junior School continually monitors the impact of its current policies and practices on disability equality in order to ensure that they do not have any adverse impact on its disabled stakeholders and to inform future planning. This is achieved by:

- consulting with stake-holders with disabilities in order that areas for change can be identified
- analysis of information from data collection relating to disability.

This Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and will always be subject to review and alteration in response to the school's impact assessments.

2: Identifying the main priorities for our school

Promoting Equality of Opportunity

Hillside Junior School is determined to promote equal access to all aspects of school life for all members of our school community.

Key Actions

This will be achieved by:

- Improving physical access to the building
- Ensuring that all thoroughfares within and around the school are free from physical barriers
- Ensuring that specialist advice is sought and cascaded to all teaching and support staff
- Ensuring that all pupils have access to any adaptive equipment that they may need
- Regularly reviewing the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils are able to access information and activities at a level and in a manner appropriate to their needs
- Use of technology such as individual computers where appropriate

The Governing Body, the School Council and the Parents' Council will work closely to monitor and review this process.

Eliminating Discrimination and Harassment

The promotion of disability equality requires an aware community. Issues of discrimination, bullying and harassment need to be recognised and addressed in policies and practices.

Key Actions

- Hold a disability awareness training session in INSET session to which all adult members of the community will be invited.
- Disability awareness training will form part of the curriculum for children and young people through the school's PSHE programme.

Disability awareness will be promoted through the school curriculum as follows:

- SEALs (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- Social skills groups
- PSHE

- Individual mentoring programmes

Promoting Positive Attitudes

Disability awareness and positive attitudes towards people with disabilities need to be embedded in the culture of the school.

Key Actions

Hillside Junior School will promote positive images of people with disability in the school by ensuring that:

- Staff model respectful and positive attitudes to pupils and adults with disabilities and explain individual needs sensitively when the need arises.
- Pupils, staff, parents and governors with disabilities hold responsible, representative senior roles where appropriate.
- Successful people who have a disability continue to be invited to high profile events in school
- The success of all pupils are celebrated
- Written communications continue to be made available in other formats where necessary

Encouraging Participation in Public Life

All members of the school community with disabilities should be made to feel welcome in the school and have the opportunity to participate in decision-making and enhancing the promotion of positive attitudes.

Key Actions

People with disability are to be encouraged and supported wherever possible to participate in school events and activities and organisations such as the proposed Parents' Council.

Staff members with disabilities to be actively encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities and to apply for promotion and representative positions within the school.

Positive images of people with disability participating in a variety of fields to be promoted around the school.

Events within school, such as sports day and extra curricular activities enable all pupils with a disability to participate.

Taking Steps to Meet the Needs of People with Disabilities, Even if This Requires More Favourable Treatment

Steps to meet the needs of people with disabilities to access all aspects of school life to be taken even if this requires more favourable treatment. This need to be reviewed through ongoing impact assessments.

Employment policy to incorporate the promotion of disability equality by ensuring that all candidates with the minimum requirements who have a disability will be eligible for interview.

School consultation will always involve opportunity for members with disability to participate collectively.

Additional support will be made available to those members with disability who put themselves forward for the governing body and/or the School Council.

3. Making it Happen

Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme will be backed up by:

- clear allocation of lead responsibility
- clear allocation of resources
- indication of expected outcomes
- clear timescales
- specified time-scale for process and review

Overall responsibility for implementation and review resides with the school's governing body.

Evaluation

This scheme to be evaluated through the process of impact assessment. Evaluation of the scheme should form part of the school SEF.

Publication and Reporting

There will be an annual report on the scheme demonstrating:

- progress made
- outcomes achieved
- work in progress
- amendments to the scheme

The report will be available to all members of the school community.

Links With Other School Plans and Policies

This scheme should be read in conjunction with the school Access Plan as well as:

- the School Improvement Plan
- the Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equalities Monitoring Procedures
- the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Protection of Employees and associated documents relating to bullying and harassment in the workplace.

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