



DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY 2007

Mission Statement

At York Road School and Language Unit we care and are concerned for the children in our charge.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to our pupil's educational development and needs.

We aim to develop in each child a greater awareness of themselves, their community and the world in which they live by reference to their spiritual, social, cultural and moral development.

We aim to instil in each child a sense of mutual respect, to provide equality of opportunity and foster a sense of belonging to a happy, caring school where all are respected and valued.

We will work in partnership with parents encouraging a positive exchange of information and will strive to improve the quality of our service through regular staff training and review of policies.

We believe that parents share our aims and will support us in all our endeavours.

Aims

At York Road we are committed to ensuring equality for all members of the school community – pupils, employees, parents/carers and visitors – who have any form of disability. We aim to ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably as a result of any school procedures, practices or built environment.

Our school will not tolerate any harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment and will promote increased understanding of and positive attitudes towards issues of social inclusion and disability equality.

What do we understand by “disability” at York Road

Our school accepts the definition given in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 that “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”.

The Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales extends this definition to define disabled people as “disabled children, young people and adults as pupils, employees, governors, parents, carers and other members of the wider community who might use the school premises for leisure and other activities, covering a broad spectrum of impairments including:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Multiple sclerosis
- Hearing or sight impairments
- Mobility difficulties
- People with mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities
- Students with statements of special educational need and those with long term medical conditions

However the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility criteria for special educational needs provision. Therefore disabled pupils may or may not have special educational needs.

The general duty to promote disability equality

The duty to promote disability equality, or the general duty (of the DDA 2005), requires all schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people’s participation in public life
- Take steps to take into account people’s disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment.

This duty supports our school aims to promote increased social inclusion and academic achievement for all groups and individuals within the school.

The specific Duty

The school is given the specific duty to produce a Disability Equality Scheme which incorporates the school's Disability Accessibility Plan.

The governing body has a duty to:

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to
- Produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme to show how they will meet these duties.

Characteristics of York Road Junior School and Language Unit

The school is situated in East Dartford. The majority of junior school pupils transfer from St Albans Road Infant School. Our speech and language unit caters for children with complex language disorders across the North West Kent area. All children in the language unit have a statement of Special Educational Need. We also have 2 children in the junior school with statements at the present time (2007-08). Within the junior school the percentage of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is 37.1%. Children from the Language Unit are well integrated into the main school for assemblies, playtimes all special events and some lessons. There is also a sharing of knowledge and expertise amongst staff to benefit all the children.

There are ramps to and from the main entrance and to allow access to the Language Unit. A parking place is reserved at the front of the car park for staff with walking difficulties.

Involvement and Consultation

In the development of our Disability Equality Scheme there has been some consultation with disabled pupils and staff. The scheme has been presented to our School Council and further consultation is planned as part of our continuing information gathering process.

Gathering Information

Information will be gathered from a variety of sources in order to monitor the impact of the scheme and evaluate our actions to inform future planning. Trends and anomalies will be identified and questioned to ensure that practice is consistent with our commitment to equality of human rights.

- Medical register
- School admissions data
- School performance data
- Attendance data
- School council discussions
- Data related to participation in extra curricular and residential visits.

Assessing the impact of school policies

To ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty our school will review policies taking into account the views from all stakeholders, including those with disabilities, in assessing the impact of school policies.

Requirements of the specific Disability Equality Scheme

The governing body is required to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in three ways, by:

- 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.

Action Plan

Our Action Plan forms part of our Disability Equality Scheme and shows what we intend to do over the next three years to meet the needs of our school community and our statutory duties. The Plan will need to be reviewed annually and its impact measured.

Overall responsibility for the plan is taken by the Head teacher and the Governing Body. The everyday implementation of the plan is the responsibility of the INCO.

Staff Development

Annual training for all staff on the implementation of the plan will be part of initial information sharing at the beginning of each school year.

Monitoring and reporting

This action plan will be reviewed every year by the Governing Body in consultation with stakeholders.

Other relevant Policies

- Equal opportunities Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- School Prospectus
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- The school's recruitment procedures
- Complaints policy
- Induction procedures
- Curriculum Policy and planning