

ST. ANDREW'S C. OF E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME POLICY

Summer 2014

Disability Equality Scheme

School name: St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

3-year period covered by the disability equality scheme: Sum 2014 - Sum 2017

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act require the governing body to:

- **promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and**
- **prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.**

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

The general duty requires public authorities to adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions and activities. (Disability Rights Commission). -- to have due regard to disability equality as covered in the specific duties. This means the past (eg closing gaps) the present and the future (planning)

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

1.1

Vision for all Children:

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School is committed to the principles of the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement, which are to

- set suitable learning challenges,
- respond to pupils' diverse needs and
- overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

To this end we aim:

- To deliver a relevant and balanced quality curriculum which enables all children to reach their full potential.
- To enable each child to grow in confidence, self-esteem and spiritual awareness.
- To foster an understanding and respect for others.
- To develop enquiring, independent and creative minds.
- For children to be happy, while belonging to a secure community and to encourage them to look forward to a challenging future.

Vision for Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities Children:

St Andrew's vision for its disabled pupils is based upon its wider commitment to equal opportunities-- that every child matters – and therefore all children are made welcome irrespective of race, creed or impairment. The school believes that:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs
- Children with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities must have access to education which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs
- Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. (*Salamanca Statement*)

St Andrew's School is keen to take a proactive approach towards disability equality, ensuring that consideration of its disabled members is embedded in all decision-making and activities. Our vision for its community is that:

- Disabled members will be free from discrimination and harassment
- There will be equality of opportunity between those who are disabled and those who are not.
- Positive attitudes towards disabled pupils, parents and staff will be promoted.
- The needs of disabled members will be met, and where necessary, steps will be taken if more favourable treatment is required.

This vision will be key to the school's plans to close any gaps left from past decision-making, in order to achieve positive outcomes for current and future disabled members of the school community.

Definition of disability

At St Andrew's we acknowledge the broad definition of disability as in government guidance and intend to count as disabled many of our children with Special Educational Needs as well as any children with an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

A person has a disability if he (or she) 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.' (DDA 1995 Part 1.1.)

'Physical impairment includes sensory impairment, such as those affecting sight or hearing as well as conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy. (Disability Rights Commission 2006 *The Duty to promote Disability Equality*).

'Mental impairment' includes any impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness. This definition has been broadened by the DDA 2005 to include mental illness which has not been 'clinically well-recognised' (DDA 2005 ch.13.18). "A particular condition exists, whether or not it has been officially diagnosed.... Equally a diagnosis does not of itself mean that a child is covered by the DDA...It is the effect on... ability to carry out day-to-day activities that has to be considered...A child's ability to memorise, concentrate, learn, speak, move is central to their education. An impairment that has a long-term and substantial effect on a child's ability to do these things may amount to a disability" (DfES 2006 *Implementing the DDA in schools and early years settings*).

The term is meant to cover a wide range of impairments relating to mental functioning, including 'learning disabilities' and hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

This plan is for the whole community of St Andrew's School, disabled and non-disabled members both present and future users.

1.2

Involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents

At St Andrew's School we aim to develop involvement of all disabled stakeholders--- pupils, staff, parents/carers and other users of the school. The school has the view of many disability rights groups: 'Nothing about us without us' and believes that people with disability should steer the Disability Equality Scheme.

In order to improve the participation of stakeholders with disability in the monitoring and review process of this scheme work is currently in progress with the setting up of a working party, to firstly identify our disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers and other school users and secondly to consult with them in order to set priorities for the scheme.

It is the aim of St Andrew's Primary School that reviewing, monitoring and amending this scheme will come under the ownership of the school's stake-holders with disability, who in turn will drive and steer its development.

Key Action

Find out who are our disabled pupils and set up a consultation process to regularly review their satisfaction.

- Use school data and discussion with class teachers and Welfare Assistant to establish the children we are targeting.
- Use the school council to hear the voice of the child and prioritise future actions needed.
- Ensure feedback is sought on an annual basis.

Key Action

Find out who our disabled staff are and involve them in the consultation process.

- Provide all staff with simple information on the definition of disability in the DDA and explain why we need this information.
- Reassure staff about confidentiality.
- Work to create a school ethos that is conducive to disclosure.
- Use exit interviews to provide useful information.
- Ensure feedback is sought on an annual basis.
- Provide website access for concerns/suggestions.

Key Action

Find out who our disabled parents and other users of the school are and develop consultation processes.

- Provide parents/carers and other users with simple website information on the definition of disability in the DDA and explain why we need this information.
- Reassure them about confidentiality
- Set up a website link for them to express concerns and give suggestions.

Key Action

To consult with other stake holdings

- From time to time as appropriate.

1.3

Information gathering:

St Andrew's School values diversity within its community and is keen to ensure that it is promoting disability equality. The School therefore collects information on its disabled pupils, staff, parents and carers, interview candidates and visitors to the school, in order to inform its future access planning, in terms of curriculum, physical environment, means of communication, as well as highlighting any possible need for improvements to employment and recruitment procedures.

The school governing body and senior managers collect information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

The information is analysed in order to show how:

- disabled children and young people have access to educational opportunity to achieve the outcomes of Every Child Matters; are included in school activities -- curricular and extra-curricular; and participate and are represented in organisations within the school, such as the School Council.
- disabled staff are represented within the various groups of employees, and levels of seniority, within the school. The exit policy for staff leavers also focuses upon the need to ensure that no employee is made to feel unwelcome due to disability.

The same process is also carried out for all candidates who come for interview, in order to ensure the promotion of disability equality and highlight any need for improvement in the school's recruitment procedure.

Key Action

Work is in progress to review and improve existing methods of data collection .The School Council and governing body are currently working with disabled stakeholders

to produce improved procedures and means of communication in order to collect details of disability, and explore ways of using this data to inform improvement in the promotion of disability equality.

One particular focus will be on the identification of pupils, staff, and parents/carers, who have medical needs. Identification of pupils with disability does not correlate to the SEN register, and there may be pupils who are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act who do not fall within the remit of the SEN framework. Moreover, the school is keen to make provision for their needs.

- Future data analysis to include looking at attendance exclusion and bullying by disability.

1.4

Impact Assessment

At St Andrew's School we recognize the importance of assessing the impact of our current policies and practices, in order to ensure the equality of opportunity between those that are disabled and those that are not.

We therefore regularly monitor the impact of the school's policies through

- Analysis of information from data collection relating to disability.
- Review and evaluate data gathered to ensure no discrimination is taking place.

This Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and will be subject to review and alteration in response to the school's impact assessments, and views expressed by its disabled members. It will be used to promote disability equality and will therefore be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve the school's vision of a welcoming and diverse community.

2. The Main Priorities

2.1

Promoting equality of opportunity

St Andrew's Primary School is keen to ensure that its vision of equal opportunities is experienced by all of its stakeholders who have a disability. The plans to increase access and to promote opportunities for pupils with a disability will be also be the focus of improvements for all staff, parents/carers, visitors to the school and candidates for interviews.

Key Actions:

Plans to review access to the physical environment, and the delivery of information to disabled children and young people, as covered by the school's accessibility plan, will be extended to include the views and needs of all adult stakeholders who have a disability. This may include:

- The use of PECs (Picture Exchange Communication system).
- Positioning of furniture so as not to be a barrier to access.
- Ensuring that specialist advice is sought and skills are cascaded to all teaching and support staff.

Additionally for the Children

- Use of adapted equipment eg special scissors, 'hand-huggers', 'writing slope' 'move and sit cushions' and alphasmart, coloured overlays where necessary.
- Use of technology eg interactive white boards and laptops.

Any affected stakeholder who has a disability may be involved in monitoring and reviewing this policy.

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

In order to achieve this, disability awareness training will form part of the curriculum for children and will be covered in INSET for staff and Governors. These events are to lead to improved outcomes for disabled members of the school community.

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

- SEALs (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning)
- PSHE (Personal Social Health Education)
- Social Skills groups
- Christian ethos

2.2

Promoting positive attitudes

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

Key Actions

St Andrew's Primary School will endeavour to promote positive images of people with disability in the school, by ensuring that:

- Staff model respectful attitudes towards pupils who have a disability, and explain more favourable treatment sensitively, when the need arises, to all pupils.
- Pupils, staff and parents with a disability hold responsible, representative and senior roles where appropriate.
- The success of pupils with disability is celebrated
- Reading materials and other forms of information communicate positive images of people who have a disability
- The school will ensure that work experience opportunities will not exclude those with a disability.

2.3

Encouraging participation in public life

This encouragement will ensure that disabled members are made to feel welcome in the school community and where appropriate have authority and an ownership in its decision-making, while also enhancing promotion of positive attitudes.

Key Actions

- People with disability to be encouraged and supported wherever possible to participate in school events and activities, organisations. For example, parents with dyslexia to be offered support to join the governing body.
- People who have a disability to be positively encouraged to apply for promotion and representative positions within the school.
- Positive images of people with disability participating are communicated within the school.
- Main school events eg sports day, to have a place for pupils with disability to participate in a positive way.

2.4

Taking steps to meet the needs of disabled people, even if this requires more positive treatment.

St Andrew's Primary School aims to treat its disabled members equally in order to promote their equality, and therefore will review areas for more favourable treatment, as required.

Key Actions

- The employment policy will incorporate the promotion of disability equality by ensuring that all candidates with the minimum requirements who are disabled will be eligible for interview.
- Additional support will be made available to those members with disability who put themselves forward for the governing body and/or the School Council.
- School consultation – will always involve opportunity for members with disability to participate collectively.

3. Making it Happen

3.1 Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the schools' vision backed up by key actions which will be reviewed when appropriate. There will be:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales
- Specified time-scale for process and review:

The school's governing body and School Council will monitor and review this scheme annually and place a report on the school website. It will be made available in alternative forms of communication which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

3.2 Evaluation

There will be internal evaluation of this scheme as above, and external with the school improvement partner and OFSTED. Evaluation of this scheme will therefore be incorporated into the OFSTED SEF, as will the data giving information on the number of pupils with disability in the school, and their achievements.

3.3 Publication

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Access Plan and forms part of the school's improvement plan and equal opportunities policy.

3.4

Reporting

The Resources Committee will report annually on changes to the scheme.

- Progress made
- Outcomes achieved
- Work in progress
- Amendments to the scheme.

3.5

Links with other school plans and policies:

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with the School Access Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to:

1. The School Development Plan
2. The Equal Opportunities Policy
3. Equalities Monitoring procedure
4. Anti-Bullying Policy
5. Protection of Employees and associated documents (including Bullying and Harassment)



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Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan Questionnaire

Dear Parents/Carers

We are in the process of updating our Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility plan and seeking the views of all parents, current and prospective.

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has three key duties towards disabled pupils:

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils

The DDA (1995 Part 1.1) states that a person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

To help us comply with our duties we would welcome your comments on the areas below.

Yours sincerely

MRS E R WAKLING
Head Teacher

1. How well do you think disabled pupils can access the curriculum?

How can we improve this?

2. How well do you think our physical environment meets the needs of disabled pupils/adults?

How can we improve?

3. How well do you think we communicate information for disabled pupils and/or adults?

How can we improve:

a) written forms of communication?

b) alternatives to writing?

4. In the development of its scheme the school needs to involve disabled people, or those

with experience of someone with a disability. Does this apply to you?

Yes:

No:

If yes:

Would you be prepared to support us in the development of our scheme:

Yes:

No:

(Please provide further detail, if desired – any details provided will be kept confidential)

5. Any additional comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return to the School Office.



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EVALUATION FORM FOR VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Please complete this form to help us meet our duties as described in the Disability Discrimination Act.

Reason for Visit:

Were you able to park and enter the school easily?
If not, what problems did you have?

Were you able to move around and use the school facilities with ease?
If not, what problems did you encounter?

How were you treated by staff and pupils? – please comment

Did you have any problems communicating with us prior to, or during, your visit?
If so, what problems did you have?

Please feel free to suggest areas for improvement for our consideration:

