

The Ashley School Academy Trust

Disability Equality Scheme
2012 - 2015

Date Approved	
Signed	(Chair of Governors)
Minuted	
Date of Next Review	March 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ashley School Academy Trust is 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 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.

2. 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 for all people regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender and disability;
- 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 pupils with disabilities. The following should be monitored:

- Achievement of pupils by disability
- Disabled staff (including numbers, type of disability and satisfaction rates in staff surveys etc.)

Additional implications

- 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.
- Events for parents and carers such as open days and meetings with teachers should be held in accessible parts of the building.
- Schools have additional implications as a service provider to make their buildings accessible when they hire out rooms or parts of the building.
- 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 pupils.
- 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.

3. HOW THE SCHOOL PLANS TO MEET THE DUTY

Pupils

All pupils have access to the same curriculum opportunities and equal opportunities throughout the school day. All pupils have access to a computer and, where appropriate, specialist equipment (ie, hearing, visual and seating).

Regular joint meetings are held between health and education and pupils are regularly assessed.

All pupils have access to extra curricular activities, including school trips, despite their disability.

Outreach Placements and Work Experience Placements

All KS4 pupils have access to alternative provision/mainstream education as part of the VRS (Vocational Recreation Studies programme) and GOALS (Greater Opportunities for All Learners in Suffolk) and Work Experience. Courses/placements are run at the three local high schools, YMCA training, The Ashley School Academy Trust and Lowestoft College.

As part of the Annual Review process, work experience placements are matched to the needs and wishes of the pupil and their parents. All pupils have equal rights.

Each placement is carefully planned and Risk Assessments carried out.

The school welcomes volunteers and students with disabilities into school for work experience as far as is reasonably possible.

Parents/Carers

All parents/carers are welcomed into the school and provided with information in appropriate formats if needed.

The school works extremely hard to address the needs of parents with disabilities and accessibility to the school site.

Staff

All staff recruited have equal rights, wherever reasonably possible, and there is no discrimination in the process.

The views of disabled staff will be sought to ensure that reasonable, appropriate adjustments are made from them in the workplace.

Governing Body

The Governing Body welcomes Governors from all sections of the community and will make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

Wider Community

All members of the community are welcomed into The Ashley School. The school strives towards high standards of accessibility for all.

Disability awareness assemblies are delivered by school staff termly and sometimes supported by the community.

4. WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED ALREADY?

The school takes its responsibility to meet the needs of disabled pupils, staff and parents and carers seriously and has already made significant progress in meeting the Disability Equality Duty in recent years.

Resources and the timetable are adapted to help disabled pupils to access the curriculum, pastoral systems ensure that disabled pupils needs are understood and that we do our best to meet these needs and the achievement of disabled pupils is monitored.

The school also works hard to address the needs of parents with disabilities and the accessibility of the school site has been significantly improved.

- KS2 area refurbishment plans enabling wheelchair access throughout and disabled access to toilets.
- Access to the main school entrance improved to allow wheelchair access.
- Access to the Reception/Administration area to allow wheelchair access.
- Toilets with disabled access in new Sports Centre.
- VRS work-related learning area has disabled access and appropriate toileting facilities.
- Planned works incorporate disabled access requirements.

Actions for hearing and sight impaired pupils

- stoppers on chairs
- carpeting
- advice and resources from Hearing Impaired team (child specific)
- blinds and anti-glare on windows
- advice and resources from Visually Impaired team (child specific), yellow lines in swimming pool area to demarcate for visual impairment
- Specialist equipment as appropriate
- Planned for 2012/13 enhanced sound projections in classrooms.

The school is committed to continuing to improve in the ways in which it fulfils its duties towards individuals by making sure it understands and addresses their particular needs as well as undertaking more general improvements as outlined in the action plan.

5. INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION

It is a requirement that disabled pupils, staff and those using school services should be involved in the production of the Disability Equality Scheme.

The Ashley School Academy Trust will consult with all pupils, parents, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme. Staff and governors will evaluate and seek the views of parents and carers, and of pupils, through the School Council. The draft Disability Equality Scheme is available to all on the schools website.

A questionnaire will be devised for parents and staff and the findings will be collated and published on the schools website.

6. MONITORING AND REPORTING

It is important to monitor the impact of the action taken to ensure that progress is being made towards meeting the Disability Equality Duty, and to ensure that no adverse impact is occurring as a result of the actions.

The monitoring of the actions outlined in the action plan will be monitored. If any adverse impacts are identified during the monitoring process, the action plan will need to be revised.

The Headteachers' report to Governors will outline the progress of the Disability Equality Scheme and assesses the implementation of the action plan for effectiveness. This report will be circulated to the Governors, and the findings will be used to improve the Disability Equality Scheme and feed into future practice.

7. MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

In order to ensure that action continues to be taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, we have drawn up an action plan appendix 1, which outlines how the requirements of the DDA will be met. This action plan has been shaped following consultation as outlined above.

Mrs Lorraine Dupen
Headteacher

This policy has been equality assessed.

**THE ASHLEY SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST
ACTION PLAN**

The following action plan outlines what will be achieved in the next year with regards to meeting the Disability Equality Duty.

2012-2015

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	Who will monitor and be responsible for this and how?	Completion date
To continue to work towards making all of the premises accessible	Need to identify any remaining areas of the site where access is restricted	Make necessary improvements/seek further funding.	Governors' Pupil Behaviour Committee monitoring visits and reports	Ongoing.
To further raise awareness of disability	We need to ensure that pupils continue to be informed about disability issues and are encouraged to reflect on their rights and responsibilities	At least one school assembly per term to address disability issues, where possible in conjunction with a national event / campaign	Governors' Pupil Achievement Committee and Leadership and Management Committee Staff Governors	Ongoing.
To further improve access to the curriculum for pupils with disabilities	Continue to monitor accessibility of curriculum for all pupils	Ensure subject leaders, class teachers and LT monitor accessibility of curriculum (through appropriate timetabling rooming and adaptation of resources)	Governors Pupil Achievement Committee and Leadership and Management Committee – reports SLT and Subject Leaders	Ongoing.
Accessibility for parents/carers	Monitor	Systems are in place to address the particular needs of disabled parents, e.g. enlarging documents, audio presentation and relocation of meetings to appropriate venues.	Deputy Headteachers	Ongoing.

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	Who will monitor and be responsible for this and how?	Completion date
To further develop school monitoring procedures	In the cycle of policy reviews, disability issues need to be addressed	Use collated information gathered on pupils' with disabilities to identify any trends or patterns in relation to pupil achievement	Governors' Pupil Achievement Committee and Leadership and Management Committee	Ongoing.
Work in developing the buildings would include fully compliant accessibility to all areas of the school	Plans for lift to KS4 area. Plans for improving residential provision to meet increasing complex needs of pupils	Working with Architect to draft plans	Full Governors	Ongoing.