

Heathmere Primary School – Accessibility Policy



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Introduction

The Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995) to cover education. The Equality Act has combined all previous acts relating to discrimination, into one, more encompassing legal area. This means that although the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has been superseded by the Equality Act, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply.

The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of: employment, education, access to goods, services and facilities. The Equality Act also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. This can apply to a carer or parent of a disabled person. In addition, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are wrongly perceived to be disabled.

Definition of Disability under the Equality Act

A person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months

The definition of disability is broad and includes a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, diabetes or epilepsy where the effect of the impairment on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is adverse, substantial and long-term.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). An impairment does not of itself mean that a person is disabled. It is the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered.

The Governing Body has three key duties towards disabled pupils:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;

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- 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.

This Policy sets out the proposals to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- 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, as appropriate to their needs.

The DDA requires schools to publish a Disability Equality Scheme (see Equality Policy) which sets out how the school will:

- eliminate harassment related to a disability
- eliminate discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account for disabled people's disabilities even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

The DES covers pupils, staff, parents and users of the school. To support implementation of this policy a DES will be produced – this will be appropriately resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually.

Aim

At Heathmere Primary School we are committed to creating a secure, caring and stimulating learning environment where all pupils and staff are valued, cared for, listened to and challenged to be the best they can be, **regardless of disability**. We are committed to providing an inclusive environment for both pupils and staff to flourish.

The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement requires that teaching and learning follow three inclusive principles:

- Setting suitable learning challenges, enabling all children to experience success and achieve as high a standard as possible through appropriate differentiation.
- Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs by:
 - creating effective learning environments;
 - securing their motivation and concentration;
 - providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches;
 - using appropriate assessment approaches;
 - setting targets for learning.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

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Analysis of need

On the Admissions Form the school asks parents to inform the school if they or their child has a disability which requires further assistance from the school.

In addition, the school has identified those pupils who have a **disability** and, through Education and Health Care Plans (EHCs), provision maps and risk assessments, it works with agencies, parents and pupils to ensure that all disabled children have full access to the curriculum.

Staff are committed to undertaking training to support the needs of all pupils. School trips will be monitored to ensure all children can access trips. Using school tracking systems, RAISEonline and lesson observations by senior staff, we track and analyse the achievement of all our pupils. As a result of regular reviews, intervention plans are regularly adapted and updated to improve learning opportunities.

The school adopts the Local Authority policy of guaranteeing an interview to job applicants with a disability, who meet the essential criteria.

All policies, when they are reviewed, will consider their impact on pupils, staff and parents with disabilities.

Where the school is aware of a disabled parent, we will seek to provide support and assistance to them in accessing the school and its facilities. At present the school does not formally request information from parents or other users with regards to disability.

Creating an Inclusive Environment in Education

Heathmere Primary School has high expectations of all its pupils, regardless of disability. Key elements in ensuring disabled pupils can access the curriculum include:

- focussed and cost effective deployment of additional support;
- appropriate pupil grouping and use of peer support.
- raise awareness of disability through the curriculum (for example, in PSHE lessons);
- access to specialist advice and support.

In addition, we aim to provide access to other aspects of learning and school life, through:

- recreation;
- movement around the school;
- special events: sports days, visiting theatre groups or story-tellers;
- extra-curricular activities and after-school clubs;
- school trips.

As part of ongoing development of the school site, Governors, the School Business Manager and the Site Manager will make appropriate improvements to the school environment which might include:

- improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings;
- improvements to toilets;
- changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas;
- the provision of ramps and improvements to doorways;

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- the provision of specialist furniture and equipment to improve access.

Improving provision of information (as and when required) in different formats

Information to disabled pupils will be distributed in a range of ways, dependent upon their need. This may include using simplified language or in visual form i.e. timetables and signs or using a symbol system (e.g. Communicate in Print)

Management, coordination and implementation

The governing body takes responsibility for the Policy and the DES. The DES is reported on annually to the Children, Families and Communities Committee, according to the annual cycle. The DES will be reviewed every three years. The Scheme should be looked at in conjunction with the SEF (School self- Evaluation Form), Staff Training Records and the Asset Management Plan. Additionally, aspects related to the plan are reported via Health and Safety reports to governors.

Implementation

- the plan will allocate responsibilities
- establish timescales
- identify resources- human and financial
- identify a source of funding eg devolved capital where necessary
- make clear anticipated outcomes, with performance criteria, where necessary
- build in review mechanisms and dates

The plan will be made available to parents if requested.

Policy approved on: February 2015

Approved by: CFC Committee