



New Town Primary School

Disability Equality Scheme

(including Accessibility Plan)

Vision and values

At New Town Primary School, we are 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 and students 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. At New Town, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

The General Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) places a general duty on schools, who need to have due regard for the following when carrying out their functions:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- 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.

The School's Duty

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.

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.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who 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'.

According to the Disability Discrimination Act, an impairment is to be treated as affecting the person's ability to carry out normal day-to day activities, only if it affects one or more of the following: mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand and perception of the risk of physical danger.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governors are responsible for:

- making sure that the school complies with Disability Equality legislation;
- ensuring that the school Disability Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed;
- reviewing this policy and its impact.

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- making sure that the school Disability Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed;
- making sure that the Disability Equality Action Plan is readily available, and that governors, staff, pupils and their parents or carers know about them;
- producing regular information for governors and staff about how the plan and how it is working;
- making sure that all staff know their responsibilities, and where necessary receive training and support in carrying these out.

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equal opportunities;
- dealing with any incidents involving discrimination on the grounds of disability;
- being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination;
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- respecting our Disability Equality Scheme.

Gathering and using information

We will gather information on disability equality as part of our collection of evidence for the School Development Plan and during the self -evaluation process. This information will be collated and used to set and review our disability equality objectives. Information will be collected on pupils and staff with disabilities, in a way that is non-intrusive and which preserves confidentiality.

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.

We consult with the following in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme:

- parents of disabled children who would like to come to New Town to identify particular needs and to ensure that, where possible, these could be met;
- parents of disabled pupils who have entered the school, and the pupils themselves, to ensure that their needs are being met;
- any staff member who has a disability;
- Reading Borough Council to ensure that as facilities are developed they meet the requirements of the DDA.

We will seek to widen our consultation by

- encouraging disabled pupils to have representation on the School Council;
- collecting and collating the views of disabled pupils;
- Including in pupil, parent, and staff surveys questions about access by the disabled to the curriculum and the facilities of the school.

Employment

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote disability equality within our workforce. We will ensure equality of opportunity throughout all our employment practices, including, recruitment, retention and training.

Bullying and harassment of staff will be monitored and appropriate action taken to address and eliminate it.

NOTE: The Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice lists key employment issues that are usually the most common ones to be considered, these include:

- flexible working arrangements
- appraisal and performance-related pay systems
- sickness absence
- redundancy selection criteria
- emergency evacuation procedures
- procurement of equipment, IT systems, software and websites
- information provision
- employee training and development
- employee assistance schemes offering financial or emotional support.

The Local Authority is a Disability Symbol user, which means we have made five commitments as an employer:

- 1 a guaranteed job interview for those who meet the essential requirements for a job
- 2 to consult disabled employees regularly
- 3 to keep employees if they become disabled
- 4 to improve the knowledge of employees about disability and
- 5 to check progress each year, plan ahead and let employees know about progress and future plans

The school will, taking medical or specialist advice where appropriate, ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to allow new and existing staff with disabilities to work effectively within the school.