

North Baddesley Junior School



SCHOOL DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME (INCORPORATING ACCESSIBILITY PLAN)

Aim

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the DDA 1995 to cover education, resulting in the **Disability Equality Duty** which requires schools to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and harassment, promote positive attitudes and encourage more disabled people to participate.

The Governing Body has key duties to ensure:

- Persons with a disability are not treated less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- “Reasonable adjustments” are made so that disabled persons are not at a substantial disadvantage
- A plan is in place to increase access for disabled users of the school including site access, the National Curriculum and extended school opportunities.

The Governors in consultation with school leaders will review the scheme regularly to maintain the extent of participation of disabled persons and to continue to improve the environment and ensure communications are available in a variety of formats as required. Disabled users will be consulted to help promote disability positively and to eliminate discrimination. The Governors will then:

- Identify potential barriers
- Plan strategically
- Ensure staff are trained appropriately
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the plan
- Utilise whole school links effectively
- Provide resources to meet needs

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” This definition has been broadened to include people with

- cancer or surviving cancer
- HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis
- a mental impairment
- a sensory impairment
- all pupils with SEN including dyslexia, autism, speech and language delay, ADHD,
- pupils with long term medical needs e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma
- pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

The definition of disability is different from the eligibility criteria for special educational needs provision. Disabled pupils may or may not have special educational needs. The school recognises that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are also part of this definition.

School Ethos: "Where Care, Co-operation and Challenge Count"

Our school ethos is to provide a caring, learning community where the contribution of each individual is valued.

Our vision is to offer a stimulating curriculum which encourages high standards enabling all children to realise their potential. To nurture every child's sense of personal responsibility enabling him or her to be confident and independent as well as being able to work as a team. We believe in working in close partnership with parents to secure the best education for their child.

Our school policy statements confirm that we are committed to ensuring equal treatment of all employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures. The school will not tolerate harassment of any person -whether disabled, with any form of impairment, or of a pupil who is a carer of disabled parents.

We are an inclusive school and promote harmony and understanding between people regardless of ability, race, social class, religion or gender.

Schools Strategic Priorities

The leadership team considers the needs of the whole community when formulating its annual School Improvement Plan. Issues arising from the evaluation of this scheme will be incorporated and detailed action to address highlighted priorities for the years ahead will be included in the appropriate sections of the plan.

Learning

All pupils are taught according to need. The school strives to ensure the curriculum is accessible and relevant to all children and that it is motivating, broad and balanced and will equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for adult life in the 21st century.

Planning is adapted to consider needs of disabled pupils in addition to differentiation in the usual manner – e.g. PE schemes have adaptations so that disabled pupils can cover the same objectives, risk assessments and pre-visits are undertaken to ensure disabled people are able to access trips and visits often resulting in borrowing special equipment, having additional volunteer helpers, modifying itineraries/agendas and hiring transport with lifts or adequate steps.

Children with disabilities have IEP's written in conjunction with their teachers, TA's, Senco and parents.

School policy encourages 'time out' corners for pupils with behavioural needs and the school has trained ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) to offer support for emotionally vulnerable pupils.

The curriculum utilises recognised materials as part of its PHSE programme and promotion of tolerance and understanding of one another is clearly evident.

The Working Together Behaviour Policy is a positive approach to managing behaviour and relies on a positive approach using rewards and incentives but acknowledges that children with disabilities may need alternative strategies to help them learn and to develop emotionally and socially. Buddy rotas are often applied to help disabled children partake fully in playtimes and lunchtimes yet having independence from adults.

If an Education and Healthcare Plan requires additional adult support, then manpower is allocated to provide one –to- one support if needs require. TAs and teaching staff are

provided with training if needed to support all children with specific needs and we ensure staff absences are covered efficiently to minimise problems arising. e.g. moving and handling, first aid, diabetes, use of Epipens, administering rectal diazepam, helping dyslexics, supporting speech and language programmes, giving prescribed medicines and carrying out physiotherapy schedules. Support from external agencies is always sought and advice acted upon. Additional resources are purchased as a priority when required e.g. sensory cushions, arm splints, exercise mats and balls, modified writing utensils, sloping desk top boards, audio equipment, gels, IT software, PE TOPS cards etc

Environment

The school site is continuously improving and evolving. We have a disabled bathroom with a shower and exercise bed and an emergency help chord. The car park has two designated disabled parking spaces close to the path leading to the main entrance. This can be used by disabled visitors or as a drop off for parents with disabled children. It is also now possible for wheelchair users to drive down the side of the school and enter through the terrace fire doors. External ramps to all external entrance doors and levelling of site surfaces have been completed to accommodate any wheelchair/frame users.

The obligations under the DDA are entirely congruent with the school's obligations to deliver high quality learning opportunities and provision of care for every member of the school community.

During school community events (concerts etc) we ask parents to let us know of disability needs and we can reserve and arrange seating to accommodate them.

Emergency evacuation aids are hired when we have a disabled person (e.g. carry- down chair). Safe storage of sticks, frames are considered as well as safe routes for wheelchair users around the ground floor – this means rooms have to be clutter-free; furniture arranged with adequate spacing and shared areas/cloakrooms kept tidy.

Class allocations are carefully planned so that children with physical disabilities are able to move to new rooms each year without the need to move up to first floor accommodation. The ICT suite, library and music rooms are now all located on the ground floor.

Fire evacuations are practised termly and may include a disabled child scenario e.g. a wheelchair escape route or fire scenario on first floor and procedures for a child to be carried down safely.

Communication

We have facilities to provide school communications in alternative formats if required e.g. larger fonts, pictorial symbols, audio cassette, phone/email. If other resources were needed, we would contact County SEN for advice and support.

School communications can be accessed via our website: www.northbaddesley-jun.hants.sch.uk

Involving the school community

Parents: The main concerns are safe access to the school building, parking, use of level floors and ground floor classrooms, and someone to be with their child at playtimes – either buddy or assigned TA. Parents with a disability, or parents of a child with a disability, are met separately and a full assessment is made prior to the child starting at the school. This group tends to be the HT, Admin officer, SENCO, class teacher and LSA.

Our extended services provision includes signposting parents to support services in the local area.

Staff: regular staff meetings, school improvement planning, SEN reports and IEP's all determine needs of disabled children and resources or training required and these are fed back to the SENCO who incorporates these into the SEN curriculum manager plan and budget forecast for consideration by management.

SEN team: identify and distribute all physical and learning support materials and items.

Admin: Manage the site aspect of disabled access – the Finance Officer manages the site manager and would feed into the Governors through the premises and resources committees. The FO also leads on health and safety. Issues regularly discussed are: risk assessments, policy review, safety glazing, non-slip floors, locks on pupil gates, security, lighting, décor colours, sound quality, IT provision, deployment of staff against budget allocations, SEN funding, statements admin, dietary concerns, medicines and medical details etc.

Pupils: there are many systems in place arising from school council meetings and consultations over the last few years. Their main concerns are being free from teasing and bullying so we have assemblies and PHSE schemes of work, buddies and play leaders to help children respect and support one another. The children know they have to report issues and that they will be believed and supported. Trained ELSAs on the staff provide Circle of Friends therapy and other programmes for specific needs. Children can be referred to them by staff or parents, or may seek help themselves.

We also have prefects, school council reps, house captains and an inclusion policy where everyone knows anyone can access all activities without prejudice or receive help when needed. Children are very tolerant of those less able or physically disabled and are proud to assist them.

Disabled pupils: We consult disabled users before implementing change. Whilst every provision is made and reasonable adjustments considered, there are times when some activities are not suitable (i.e. could cause danger) and the children have to be offered an alternative way to meet their objectives in school e.g. if a river study was deemed unsuitable for a wheelchair user due to distance, uneven terrain and water access and a TA could be assigned to build a mini river system in the playground to be able to demonstrate similar teaching points.

Whilst we have disabled bathroom, disabled children often decline to use it as they don't want to be different so we have to be sensitive and adaptable. Teachers have strategies to support pupils with ADHD or other emotional/social/behavioural conditions: feelings cards, time out corners, activity boxes etc

Governors: the governors are responsible for the budget and execution of the improvement plan and meet regularly as whole governors or committees to discuss issues in detail, agree policy and evaluate impact. Resources and Standards will all discuss disabled provision and there is dedicated SEN Governor who takes particular interest.

Teachers/curriculum managers: meet together and track progress, plan schemes of work and consult colleagues. Needs arising are shared immediately with senior team or incorporated into their annual curriculum plan and budget forecasts in the Spring term.

The main actions to be taken following a review to promote disability equality are described in the school's Accessibility Plan which forms part of the School's Improvement plan. Which is a live process which is subject to revision and amendment at the end of each year in order to prioritise expenditure, time and resources. Responsibility for developing and monitoring this scheme lies with the Head teacher, Assistant Head teachers, School Governors, the SEN team and potentially groups of children.

Membership of the Governing Body is open to all eligible persons irrespective of disability. Members of the Governing Body are encouraged to visit school to aid monitoring of measures taken.

Applications for teaching staff and assistants are open to all applicants irrespective of disability, our disabled access arrangements facilitate working here. The school is constantly mindful of work-life balance and stress –related illness and promotes team support, collaboration and an open door policy, signposting staff to support services via H&S noticeboard near the staffroom or contacting the authority on their behalf (EPS, OHU, etc). The school nurse service provides a direct link between school and health care professionals dealing with our pupils and their parents. The school nurse service helps the school anticipate and plan for the needs of current and future disabled users of the school and offers support to families.

School Lettings

Developments to improve accessibility of the school to disabled users are considered. It is important that community users have full access to all areas of school and hirers/users are asked to discuss their requirements with school staff when using premises.

Reviewing/Monitoring

The scheme will be monitored through the year and in a full annual review in January by a team of staff and Governors. The views of those pupils (and their parents) affected by the policy will be sought during IEP reviews and other settings. The school will use the information gathered to update and amend the policy, setting new targets in the accessibility strategy to further the aims of the school in this area.