



— THE —
ELMGREEN
— SCHOOL —

Disability Equality Scheme

2009 – 2012

Disability Equality Scheme

1. The Legal Background and Duty to Promote Disability Equality

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

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: students, 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.

This policy should be read alongside the school's policies on Equality of Opportunity, Race Equality and Gender Equality.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA require the governing body to plan to increase access to education for disabled students in 3 ways:

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

This scheme incorporates the school's plans to increase access to education for disabled students.

The Disability Discrimination Act, (2006) requires us to have due regard to the following duties in all that we do:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- eliminate disability related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life

- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This scheme aims to set out how we will meet these general duties.

This scheme should be read in conjunction with Accessibility Plan.

It is the responsibility of the whole school community to implement this scheme in a manner which promotes the inclusive ethos of our school.

2. The purpose and direction of the school's scheme.

At The Elmgreen 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. We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

3. The Involvement of Disabled Children and Young People, Staff and Parents

In preparing this scheme, disabled people were involved in the following ways:

- Questionnaire
- Meetings of The Families and Friends of The Elmgreen School
- Student Voice
- Family Forum

In the longer term, disabled people will be involved in the following ways:

Parental surveys give opportunity for disabled people to disclose their disability. Outcomes from these will be analysed to identify any issues relating to the person's disability

- Student surveys and interviews as part of the normal cycle of self-evaluation are also used to identify any issues relating to a child or young person's disability
- Disabled staff have regular meetings with their line manager to discuss how the school can best enable them to work
- Children and young people with disabilities have regular meetings with their learning mentors to identify any perceived difficulties. Learning mentors make recommendations to the Headteacher.
- Drop in sessions organised by The Families and Friends of The Elmgreen School

We do not presume that the views held by the parents of a disabled child or young person are shared by that child or young person and therefore always seek to gain the views of both parent and child.

When seeking the views of disabled people, we use their preferred means of communication.

4. Gathering Information

Disabled students and staff are identified through self declaration, information provided by parents, students primary records on transfer to Year 7, information provided by Occupational Health or other professionals in relation to staff. Data protection legislation will be observed in sharing this information.

Disabled parents, governors and other school users are identified through self-declaration. Data protection legislation will be observed in sharing this information.

We explain to parents, staff, governors, community users and students why the information about disability is needed.

5. Using the Information

The information about disabled staff and students will be used to assess:

- The effect of our policies and practices on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
- The effect of our policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to, and achievements of, disabled students.

The information about disabled parents and community users will be used to assess:

- The effect of our policies and practices on the involvement of parents in their child's education
- The effect of our policies and practices on the involvement of disabled users in community activities.

Information on staff will be analysed in respect of the representation of disabled people:

- In all aspects of the work of the school, for example: teaching, teaching support, administrative support;
- At all levels of seniority in the school;
- Amongst those awarded Teaching and Learning Responsibility Payments;
- As permanent or temporary members of staff, full- or part-time or casual staff;
- In training and professional development opportunities;

- In disciplinary and capability proceedings;
- In harassment and bullying procedures;
- As contract staff, for example: contract cleaners and agency supply teachers;
- Among those who take sick leave;
- Among trainee teachers on placement at the school; and
- Among those leaving the profession early.

The analysis of information about disabled staff will be used to contribute towards the understanding of how policies and procedures impact on their recruitment and retention. It is our aim to:

- Attract a wider field for recruitment, including disabled people
- Retain the experience and skills of employees who become disabled during their working life and avoid the costs of recruiting and training new people;
- Develop in-house expertise about what disabled staff and/or students may require;
- Provide role models for children and young people;
- Bring different life experiences and new skills to the school; and
- Help foster good relations with all employees by showing that everyone is valued and treated fairly.

When necessary we will use the services of Access to Work to ensure we make every reasonable adjustment to meet the needs of disabled staff. (see appendix 6)

Information collected about disabled children and young people will contribute towards the understanding of how policies and procedures impact on their opportunities and achievement. It is our aim to improve:

- Opportunities for disabled learners to take positions of responsibility;
- Satisfaction and enjoyment levels across a range of school activities;
- Aspirations and ambitions for the future;
- Ensuring that the talents of disabled students are represented accordingly through the Gifted and Talented Registers
- Successful transition into the next stages of education, training or employment;
- Access to educational visits
- Involvement in after school clubs and activities;
- Access to work experience placements;
- Take up of careers advice.
- Attainment and achievement of disabled learners
- Exclusion rates of disabled learners
- Admissions of disabled learners

Information collected about disabled parents will contribute towards the understanding of how policies and procedures impact on their ability to support

their child's education and the ease in which they can carry out day to day communication with school. It is our aim to:

- Use disabled people's preferred means of communication when contacting parents, meeting with them or sharing information with them;
- Ensure disabled parents are encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress and that every reasonable step is taken to remove barriers to attending parents evening. Where attendance is not possible because of a disability, make alternative arrangements;
- Give disabled parents priority when arranging events and meetings e.g. by considering seating arrangements for a school drama production;
- Give disabled parents preferential parking rights;
- Ensure the needs of young carers are met;

Information collected about disabled governors will contribute towards the understanding of how school policies and procedures impact on recruitment and retention and their ability to take a full and active part in governors' activities. It is our aim to improve:

- The representation of disabled people on the governing body;
- The accessibility of meetings for disabled governors;
- The accessibility of other governor's activities.

Information collected about disabled users of the school will contribute towards the understanding of how school policies and procedures impact on their ability to take a full and active part in community activities. It is our aim to:

- Encourage community groups to ensure their activities are accessible;
- Give due regard to disabled community users when revising school policies and procedures.

6. Impact Assessment

The school will examine its policies, procedures and practices to assess their impact in the equality of opportunity for disabled in people. The assessment will involve disabled people and the person responsible for designing and implementing the policy. Wherever possible, evaluative data to show the impact of policies on disabled people will be collated. Anecdotal evidence will also be used, e.g. informal feedback from a disabled person about the impact of a policy or procedure.

As a first step towards assessing the impact of policies on disabled people, the policies of the school will be screened to identify their level of relevance and potentially their impact on disabled people. Policies with a high relevance will take priority for review. (This analysis will be added as Appendix 1)

A schedule will be written for the review of all policies over the lifetime of this scheme. (This schedule will be added as Appendix 2 and 3)

Issues arising from the impact assessment will be prioritised and added as an appendix to the Action Plan.

All future policies, procedures and practices will be assessed as they are written or planned, prior to introduction using the engagement processes outline above.

7. Planning for Action

Arrangements for the First Action Plan

The initial Action Plan includes information on:

- Improving information gathering mechanisms,
- The mapping of policies and practices and
- How the involvement of disabled students and disabled adults can be facilitated.

The priorities for the school's scheme will in future be set in the light of:

- An examination of the information that the school has gathered;
- The messages that the school has heard from the disabled students, staff and parents who have been involved in the development of the scheme; and
- An assessment of the impact of current policies on disability equality.
- Urgent action necessary following an examination of the information will be added to the action plan before the review date.

The action plan is included as Appendix 4

8. Implementation

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Action Plan

- The implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by the governing body. A report will be made to the governors each year. A checklist to aid governors is included as Appendix 5
- The key priorities of the scheme will be incorporated into the School Development Plan and its effectiveness included in the Self Evaluation Form.
- The evaluation the effectiveness of our scheme will be reflected in our discussions with our school improvement partner and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

9. Publication of the Scheme

Our scheme will be published

- On the school website;
- It will be available in paper format to anyone on request.

10. Reporting

The school must report annually on the progress being made to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Annual reporting will bring together details of information gathered during the year, how that information was used, action points completed during the year and those that are ongoing. Disabled people will be involved in the process.

This report will be published

- On the school website;
- It will be available in paper format to anyone on request.

11. Reviewing and Revision of the Scheme

As a new school which grows year on year, the information used to inform this policy will be reviewed to see if the priorities set are still relevant or need amending to reflect any changes in the nature of the student or staff body and to reflect the needs of older students.

As part of the review of the scheme, we will revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the scheme and re-examine the information to see if actions that the school has taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for disabled students, staff and parents.

The review of the scheme will inform its revision: how the school sets new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will again involve disabled students, staff and parents and be based on information that the school has gathered.

The Scheme will be reviewed fully in 2009-10 with the move of the school to its permanent site in Elmcourt Road and the opening of the Hearing Impaired Unit.

Reviewed by the Governing Body on 29 June 2009

Review Date May 2010

Signed
Chair of Governors

Impact Assessment Process

1. Screening Process

- Gather a representative group, including disabled people.
- Identify policies, procedures and practices for them to discuss.
- Decide who has responsibility for the policy, procedure or practice and involve them at the relevant time.
- Determine if there is scope for promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people within the policy, procedure or practice.
- Give the policy, procedure or practice high, medium or low priority with regards to adversely impacting on equality of opportunity for disabled people.

2. Consider the evidence

- Decide what evidence you need to collect to gauge whether it has an adverse impact on disabled people.
- Use a mix of qualitative and quantitative data from a wide range of sources, including anecdotal evidence.
- Ensure research is reliable and valid.

3. Impact Questions

- On the basis of information gathered, does the policy, procedure or practice have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for disabled people?
- Is the policy, procedure or practice discriminatory, and, if so, is that justifiable?
- Does the policy, procedure or practice promote, or have the potential to promote, equality of opportunity for disabled people?

4. Reduce adverse impacts

- If an adverse impact was found:
 - Investigate why there was an adverse impact.
 - Find measures that can reduce or eliminate the adverse impact.
 - Provide clear reasons for changing the policy, procedure or practice and what you hope to achieve with any changes.
 - Assess the proposed changes for any adverse impact.

5. Consultation

- Ensure a representative sample of people are consulted, with specific measures for consulting disabled people.
- Use a variety of accessible methods for consultation.
- Take into account issues in proportion to their relevance to disabled people generally.

6. Publication

- Decide how the impact assessment and final decisions will be recorded, e.g. minutes of meetings, impact assessment report, agreed form.
- Determine how much publicity is needed.
- Decide where and how to publicise.

Impact Assessment in the future

Initially, schools will be playing catch-up, to assess existing policies, procedures and practices. In future, schools will need to:

- Ensure mechanisms are in place for regular impact assessments
- Allocate responsibilities and put together a timescale for re-assessment.

Action Plan

Decide how you wish to organise your action plan. It could be organised under the six general duties (2.1.3. above) or could be organised under activities in the school or college (e.g. Teaching and Learning; Staffing; Governors; Community Activities, etc.)

The first action plan must contain arrangements for setting up systems to involve disabled people, ways of collecting and collating information and arrangements for the prioritisation of reviews of policies and practices.

Priority	Responsible Person (s)	Action Required	Resources	Timescale	Date & process of review	Success Criteria
Set up systems to involve disabled people.		1. Establish a consultative group with representation from disabled people.				
		2. Establish a mechanism for surveying the views of disabled learners in the school.				
Establish a timescale for the review of policies, procedures and practices in light of the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act.						

Priority	Responsible Person (s)	Action Required	Resources	Timescale	Date & process of review	Success Criteria
Establish systems for information gathering, in order to meet the six general duties outlined in the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act.						

Priority	Responsible Person (s)	Action Required	Resources	Timescale	Date & process of review	Success Criteria

The disability equality duty and the governing body

Questions the governing body may want to ask itself as the 'responsible body' for the school:

<i>Duties to disabled students, staff and parents</i>	Yes	No	Evidence
Does the GB receive regular reports on how the school is meeting its duties to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> disabled students? disabled staff? disabled parents, carers, governors, other disabled people who use the school or may want to? 			
Disability equality duty: General duty			
Does the GB have regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote equality of opportunity for disabled people? eliminate disability discrimination? eliminate disability-related harassment? promote positive attitudes towards disabled people? encourage participation by disabled people in public life? take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment? 			
Disability equality duty: Specific duty			
Does the school have a disability equality scheme?			
Did the school involve disabled people (students, staff, parents) in the development of the scheme?			
Does the school's scheme show : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how disabled people have been involved? how information is gathered on the effect of the school's policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recruitment, retention of disabled staff? opportunities for, achievements of disabled students? how the school assesses the impact of its policies, current or proposed, on disability equality? the steps it is going to take to meet the general duty (the school's action plan)? how information will be used to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes? 			
Did the school implement the actions in its scheme within three years?			
Does the GB: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> report on its scheme annually? review and revise its scheme every three years? 			

Access to Work

Access to Work is a scheme which is designed to help employers and disabled employees, or potential employees, find solutions to practical obstacles that prevent disabled people making the most of employment opportunities.

There are several ways in which Access to Work can help. For example, it can help pay for:

- communication support, for a deaf or hearing impaired person who may need support at an interview;
- a reader at work, for a blind or visually impaired person;
- special equipment (or alterations to existing equipment) to suit particular work needs arising from a disability; and
- help with the additional costs of travel to work for people who are unable to use public transport.

Access to Work can also pay for a support worker, if a disabled person needs practical help either at work or getting to work. The type of support on offer might include:

- someone to read to a person with a visual impairment;
- someone to support communication for a person with a hearing impairment; or
- a specialist coach for a person with learning difficulties.

Access to Work does not replace the normal responsibilities of the employer to implement Health and Safety regulations or replace the responsibilities required by the Disability Discrimination Act.

An employer or a disabled employee or potential employee can find out more by:

- contacting their local Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) through their nearest Jobcentre Plus Office. The DEA will put you in touch with an Access to Work Adviser who will discuss your particular circumstances with you;
- looking on the Jobcentre Plus website: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk