



*Achieving Excellence Together in a Caring Community*

# Disability Equality Policy

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Disability Equality Co-ordinator	Cathy Bell
Governor:	Ian Love
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At Dorchester Primary 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 Dorchester Primary we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **The Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

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### **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 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 Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

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### **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 children and young people 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 for schools**

The role of a school as a service provider

Schools have additional implications as a service provider to make their buildings accessible when they hire out rooms or parts of the building.

Contact with parents and carers

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.

Additionally, events for parents and carers such as open evenings, meetings with teachers, should be held in accessible parts of the building.

Hiring transport

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 students.

## **The Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

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### **Election of parent governors**

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.

### **Involvement and consultation**

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

Dorchester Primary will consult with disabled pupils, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme by consulting with disabled pupils / staff / parents to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality over the next three years through questionnaires and individual discussions.

### **Making things happen**

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In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, Dorchester Primary School has drawn up an action plan to make things happen, which outlines how the requirements of the DDA 2005 will be met. This action plan has been shaped in consultation with disabled people as outlined in the previous section, and may include some of the good practice examples below.

### **Good practice examples**

The following examples were gathered from Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators in Harrow schools, and provide good practice suggestions on how disability equality can be promoted in a school environment.

### **Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people**

- Access to full and extended curriculum
- Promoting deaf awareness week
- All involved in concerts/assemblies/gifted and talented register
- Practical provision/changes
- Use of PSHE/circle times to promote awareness of disabilities – use of professionals to do this; e.g. SACT
- Equal access/reasonable adjustments

- Representation on school council/groups
- Include on behaviour policy
- Accessibility plan
- Publicise support networks e.g. Kids Can Achieve, NASH
- Information on parent noticeboard

**Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability**

- Training of **all** staff re DDA (SMSAs and wider community)
- Monitoring incidents
- Monitor attitudes in the playground
- Follow up incidents
- Awareness weeks
- Positive role models
- Staff training on correct use of language
- Staff training on law/legal requirements
- Clear policy/guidelines
- Assigned person with responsibility/named member of staff to provide training
- Summary of policy to parents/available to visitors

**Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people**

- Links with special schools
- Stories
- Resources to reflect disabilities
- Photographs
- Display
- Awareness of famous people with disabilities
- Work with outside agencies (e.g. SACT HI teaching signing to whole class)
- PSHE/circle time/citizenship/circle of friends/SEAL
- Parent workshops
- Review library resources
- “All equal all different” pack (Disability Rights Commission)

**Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people through:**

- Assemblies
- Concerts
- Meet and greet - tours of school
- Speakers
- Annual events
- Community links
- Role models
- Clubs, school council, representing the school
- Buddies/monitors
- After school clubs

## Monitoring and reporting

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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 in accordance with the specified timescales. If any adverse impacts are identified during the monitoring process, the action plan will need to be revised.

An annual report will be produced which outlines the progress of the Disability Equality Scheme and assesses the implementation of the action plan for effectiveness. This report will be circulated to the Head-teacher and Governors, and the findings will be used to improve the Disability Equality Scheme and feed into future practice.

- ✓ Is information collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- ✓ Is pupil achievement monitored by disability? Are there are trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- ✓ Are disabled pupils encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- ✓ Is bullying and harassment of disabled pupils and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- ✓ Is disability portrayed positively in school books, displays and discussions such as circle time and class assemblies?
- ✓ Does the school take part in annual events such as Deaf Awareness week to raise awareness of disability?
- ✓ Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- ✓ Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats which are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?
- ✓ Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?

For further information, please contact: Debs Damestani SENCo/Headteacher