

Foxmoor School

Disability Equality Scheme

Foreword:

Valuing diversity is central to achieving the overall aim of Foxmoor School where our mission states that we aim to:

'...provide the best learning and working environment possible, where every member of the school community feels happy and safe, is given the opportunity to succeed and knows their contribution is valued.'

The Governing Body of Foxmoor School is therefore pleased to publish its Disability Equality Scheme. The total scheme includes: policies and procedures and an accessibility plan which will ensure equality for all people in our extended school community. In developing the scheme, we have been able to identify and record the progress we have made towards achieving disability equality and tackling discrimination, and we have come to a better understanding of the challenges still to be tackled. We will ensure that this Disability Equality Scheme is effectively implemented and scrutinised so that we meet the obligations placed upon us by the Disability Discrimination Act. We intend to use the Act to make real and tangible changes to how we conduct our business, changes that will make a positive difference to the lives of people with disabilities. Promoting disability equality in our school will be a continuous process. It will be undertaken in partnership with the wider community and, of course, with people who themselves have a disability as they are the experts. We would like to thank those who have been involved in developing the scheme and we hope that we can continue to work together with people to achieve disability equality in Foxmoor School.

(Chair of Governors)

Foxmoor School Disability Non-Discrimination Policy

(This policy must be viewed alongside the following: Managing Medicines in School, and the policies on Manual Handling and Intimate Care.)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our school's mission statement speaks of valuing the individuality of all our pupils. We are committed to giving each child every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations for all children: the achievements, attitudes and well-being of each child matters. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.
- 1.2 The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 aims to end discrimination against people with disabilities and to improve access in all areas of life. Since 2002, it has been unlawful for schools and Local Authorities to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in admissions and exclusions, in education, and in associated services.
- 1.3 Since 1st October 2004 it is unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities by preventing them from having access to premises. Along with all other public buildings, Foxmoor School is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable access.
- 1.4 Our Accessibility Plan details the changes required to our buildings and to other aspects of our school, in order that we fulfil our legal obligations, and remove barriers to inclusion for all pupils and staff with disabilities.

2 What is disability?

- 2.1 The Disability and Discrimination Act states that:
'A person suffers from a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities'.
Substantial means 'more than minor or trivial,' and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.
- 2.2 Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, autism.
- 2.3 Disability is said to have an adverse effect if it affects one or more of the following
 - Mobility
 - Manual dexterity
 - Physical coordination
 - Continence
 - Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
 - Speech
 - Hearing
 - Eyesight (unless brought to functionally useful level by spectacles or lenses)
 - Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
 - Perception of risk or physical danger.

In considering what might constitute a substantial disadvantage, the school has taken account of a number of factors, e.g.

- The time and effort that might need to be expended by a disabled child.
- The inconvenience, indignity or discomfort a disabled child might suffer.
- The loss of opportunity or the diminished progress that a disabled child may make in comparison with his or her peers who are not disabled.

2.4 Disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa.

3 Our school aims

3.1 Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our pupils, and this of course, includes pupils with disabilities.

3.2 We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities, as pupils without disabilities, to benefit from the education our school provides.

3.3 We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his or her disability.

3.4 We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage.

3.5 We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before he or she joins the school.

4 Removing barriers

4.1 The school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils, members of staff and members of the public are not disadvantaged.

4.2 Disabilities can limit the extent to which pupils are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. So, for example, if a child suffers from hearing loss, the teacher will always try and face the child when addressing the class, or, in severe cases, the teacher may wear a microphone with a receiver for the child.

4.3 The School Accessibility Plan covers the measures we have already taken, and are still taking, to improve our school.

5 The physical environment

5.1 We will endeavour to improve provision for all people with disabilities by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available.

Already we have improved the following:

- access to the school by: installing setting-down and picking-up points, ramps and handrails – currently the school buildings and grounds are fully accessible for all people with mobility difficulties;
- movement around the building, for example by adaptations, such as improved colour schemes, for people with impaired sight;
- accommodation within the building, by providing accessible toilets for pupils and adults with disabilities;
- furniture, by procuring rise-and-fall tables and sinks and ovens installed at child height;

- information and communication technology, by selecting appropriate hardware and software, and by using minicomps;
- signage, by putting it in clear print;
- suitable colour backgrounds when working from the smartboards for pupils with tracking difficulties or Scotopic Sensitivity.
- providing a dedicated parking space for people with disabilities;
- installed dropped curbs to facilitate access to all areas of grass, playgrounds, car park and school buildings.

6 The curriculum

- 6.1 We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our extra-curricular, out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.
- 6.2 We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.
- 6.3 Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.
- 6.4 The school regularly reviews the way resources are matched to the needs of all children. In order to improve our provision, we will make any necessary adjustments to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.
- 6.5 Many of the adjustments we make are dependent upon individual needs, and we are moving towards more individualised approaches. Individual Education Plans (My Plans) are effective and manageable.
- 6.6 We seek and respond to guidance from the parents and the pupils as well as other outside agencies.

7 Information

- 7.1 Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user-friendly, such as Braille, audio tape, and large print, or it may be transmitted orally, or through lip-speaking or sign language, or through a recognised symbol system, or through ICT.
- 7.2 We always take account of disabilities, be they the pupils', their parents', staff or visitors. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

8 Staffing

- 8.1 When advertising posts, interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures, and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.
- 8.2 Should a member of staff become disabled, the Governing Body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.
- 8.3 All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

9 Additional staff support from outside services/agencies

The school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, the school nurse, social workers, and the staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies. We benefit from the LA's advice, and its provision through the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired services and the Advisory Teacher Service.

10 Health and Safety

- 10.1 Where a pupil has an exceptional, on-going medical condition requiring regular medication e.g. diabetes, anaphylaxis shock. Members of staff follow the school procedures both for the storage and for the administration of medicines to pupils.
- 10.2 There are set procedures for when it is necessary to clear away and clean blood or other bodily fluids/substances.
- 10.3 The school has members of staff qualified to give first-aid treatment, and the emergency services will be called, should they be required.

11 Policy into practice

- 11.1 The Governing Body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate.
- 11.2 A named governor and a designated member of staff jointly discharge the responsibility of ensuring that we meet our obligation not to discriminate.
- 11.3 The Headteacher will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.
- 11.4 All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents or staff with disabilities.
- 11.5 Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

12 Monitoring

- 12.1 We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.
- 12.2 We monitor:
 - pupil admissions;
 - pupil attainment;
 - pupil achievement
 - exclusions;
 - rewards and sanctions;
 - parental and pupil questionnaires.
 - effectiveness of reasonable adjustments
 - recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff.
- 12.3 We will use the results of our monitoring and assessment activities to make reasonable adjustments, review the effectiveness of this plan and identify future priorities. Evaluations based on this data are then reported to the governing body, and an action plan will be drawn up if necessary.

13 Monitoring and review

- 13.1 The Governing Body has a named governor with responsibility for matters of disability discrimination. It is this governor's responsibility to keep the Governing Body informed of any new regulations, and to ensure that the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures. The governor in question also liaises with the LA and other external agencies, to ensure that the school's procedures are in line with those of the LA.
- 13.2 The Headteacher implements the school's disability non-discrimination policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.
- 13.3 The Headteacher reports to governors annually on matters regarding disability discrimination.
- 13.4 This policy has been ratified by the whole Governing Body and will be reviewed at any time on a request from the governors, a parent, or pupil or at least once every two years.

This policy must be viewed alongside the following:

Managing Medicines in School, The policy on Manual Handling and Intimate Care.

Signed:

(Chair of Governors)