



## DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME SEPTEMBER 2007 - SEPTEMBER 2010

### INTRODUCTION

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 require the governing body to:

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

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

- 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.

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

### PURPOSE

1.1 At Milecastle Primary School we are committed to establishing equality for all students, their parents, staff and other users of the school. As part of our school aims we wish to:

- develop the children's ability to relate to and work with both adults and children by promoting respect and understanding for all
- promote positive attitudes and equality of opportunity for all, regardless of race, gender, culture, religion, social background or disability
- being welcoming and accessible to all stakeholders and their requirements.

1.2 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.

1.3 This scheme should be read in conjunction with our Accessibility Plan.

1.4 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 Involvement of Disabled Children and Young People, Staff and Parents**

2.1 Governors, including parent governors, were asked for their ideas for improvements to current systems.

2.2 In the longer term the school will encourage disabled people to be involved in the following ways:

- parental surveys will 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
- pupil surveys and interviews as part of the normal cycle of self-evaluation will also be used to identify any issues relating to a child or young person's disability
- disabled staff will have regular meetings with their line manager to discuss how the school can best enable them to work
- children with disabilities will have regular meetings with the SENCO to identify any perceived difficulties. The SENCO will make recommendations to the Head teacher.

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

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

### 3 Gathering Information

3.1 Disabled pupils and staff are identified through self-declaration and admission forms. Data protection legislation will be observed in sharing this information.

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

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

3.4 The information about disabled staff and pupils 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 pupils.

3.5 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.

3.6 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.

3.7 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:

- 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 pupils may require
- provide role models for children
- bring different life experiences and new skills to the school
- 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.

3.8 Information collected about disabled children 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
- successful transition into the next stages of education, training or employment;
- access to educational visits
- involvement in after school clubs and activities;
- attainment and achievement of disabled learners
- exclusion rates of disabled learners
- admissions of disabled learners.

3.9 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.

3.10 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 governors activities.

3.11 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.

#### **4 Impact Assessment**

4.1 In line with guidance, impact assessments will involve disabled people at an appropriate point. The commitment to involving disabled people should not become burdensome on them. In some instances, the involvement of disabled people might not be necessary e.g. where they have already been involved in assessing a similar situation. Our impact assessments will always involve someone who is involved with the designing and implementation of the policy or practice.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 We will welcome input on our policies and practices from disabled stakeholders.

4.6 Practices with a high relevance will be take priority for assessment. Over the next three years, all practices will be assessed. Practices assessed will include:

- Recruitment practices
- Teaching approaches
- Classroom routines
- Registration routines
- Homework
- Office routines
- Communication with staff
- Communication with parents.

This list will be extended as further practices are identified.

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

4.8 All future policies, procedures and practices will be assessed as they are written or planned, prior to introduction.

4.9 We will welcome input on our policies from disabled stakeholders.

4.10 Following impact assessment of new policies, procedures and practices, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure equality of experience for disabled people.

## **SECTION 2: PLANNING FOR ACTION**

### **Arrangements for the First Action Plan**

2.1 In line with the DRC guidance, our initial Action Plan includes information on:

- improving information gathering mechanisms,
- the mapping of policies and practices and
- how the involvement of disabled pupils and disabled adults can be facilitated.

We have also identified good practice from examples given in training and as result of this have included certain actions to meet the Disability Equality Duty.

2.2 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 pupils, 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.

2.3 Urgent action necessary following an examination of the information will be added to the action plan before the review date.

2.4 In writing our action plan, we have addressed the general duties to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate discrimination
- Eliminate harassment
- Promote positive attitudes
- Encourage participation in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

2.5 Our action plan is included as an appendix.

### **Annual Reporting**

2.2.1 Schools 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 in the school prospectus.

The person responsible for producing the Annual Report is the Head Teacher

### **3. Implementation**

#### **Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Action Plan**

3.1.1 The implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by the governing body. A report will be made to the governors each year by the Head Teacher. A checklist to aid governors is included as an appendix.

3.1.2 The Action plan will be appended to the School Development Plan and the Accessibility Plan in order to increase the effectiveness of these.

3.1.3 The evaluation of the effectiveness of our scheme will be reflected in our discussions with our SIP and with Ofsted when the school is inspected.

3.1.4 As part of the New Relationship with Schools, the School Improvement Partners will include in their discussions with schools the attainment of and outcomes for all pupils including disabled pupils. Measures of achievement of pupils with disabilities will form part of our evaluation of the effectiveness of our scheme.

### **3.2 Publication of the Scheme**

Our scheme will be published. It will be available in paper format to anyone on request.

It will be adapted to meet the needs of disabled persons e.g. the visually impaired, as required.

### **3.3 Reviewing and Revision of the Scheme**

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 pupils, 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 pupils, staff and parents and
- be based on information that the school has gathered.

The Scheme will be reviewed annually within the first 3 years. The head teacher and SENCO will be responsible for initiating the review of this scheme.

POLICY IMPLEMENTED: DECEMBER 2007

GOVERNOR SIGNATURE:

POLICY REVIEWED:

GOVERNOR SIGNATURE:

## APPENDIX 1 Disability and Equality Scheme Action Plan

This Action Plan has been established to meet the six general duties of the Disability and Discrimination Act, these being:

- . 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.

PRIORITY	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	ACTIONS	RESOURCES	TIMESCALE	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Set up systems to involve disabled people	Head Teacher	Seek views from the school community on how access and equality in school could be improved.	Via survey	June 2008	Views are gathered from a wide source to establish best practice
Coordinators to seek the views of disabled pupils during any monitoring time.	Coordinators			- Annually By June 2008 June 2009	Appropriate provision is available for disabled pupils in each subject.
Establish a	Head	Practices in		2007-2008	All curriculum

timescale for the review of policies, procedures and practices in light of the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act.	Teacher	curriculum policies to be reviewed alongside individual policy review.		Thereafter on the rolling programme of policy review. Initial review by July 2008	policies reflect equal opportunities afforded to disabled pupils.
Establish a timescale for the review of policies, procedures and practices in light of the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act.	Head Teacher	All governor policies to be reviewed in line with their 3 year rolling programme.		2007 - 2010 Through governor committees	All governor policies and practices reflect equal opportunities afforded to disabled pupils and stakeholders.
Establish systems for information gathering, in order to meet the six general duties outlined in the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act.	Office Staff adapt admission forms to ensure information can be gathered from disabled parents/carers as well as pupils.	from November 2007			Relevant information sought.

Audit the potential to hold a Disability Awareness Week for information gathering.	Head Teacher / SENCO	Invite disabled persons/groups to speak to the children. Possible donations to charities Spring Term 2009			Following the week, survey children on understanding of disability & perceptions. Children show empathy, understanding and knowledge of different disabilities and disabled persons needs.
Review recruitment practices both advertising and interview procedures.		Dec 2007			Good practice is reflected in recruitment practices.
Review teaching approach and classroom routines as each disabled child is admitted		One term following child's admission			Child's needs are met.
Review Homework policy in light of support available from		As required One term following child's			Child's needs are met.

disabled parents.		admission			
Review communication options with parents (Linked to Accessibility Plan)		As required One term following child's admission			Parents/carers can access all information.
Review communication options with staff.		As required One term following needs discussed.			Member of staff can access all information
Review school's equal opportunities policy to ensure all disabled persons and not just children are referred to.		Sept 2007 Rolling programme of policy review			Policy reflects school's commitment to equal opportunities for disabled persons.

The Disability Equality Duty and the Governing Body

Questions the governing body will ask itself annually as the 'responsible body' for the school:

	Yes/no	Evidence
Is the Governing Body discharging its responsibilities under the DD Act 2005 to pupils, staff and parents?		
Does the GB receive regular reports on how the school is meeting its duties to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disabled pupils?</li> <li>• disabled staff?</li> <li>• disabled parents, carers, governors, other disabled people who use the school or may want to?</li> </ul>		
<b><u>Disability equality duty: General duty</u></b> Does the GB have regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote equality of opportunity for disabled people?</li> <li>• eliminate disability discrimination?</li> <li>• eliminate disability-related harassment?</li> <li>• promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?</li> <li>• encourage participation by disabled people in public life?</li> <li>• take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment?</li> </ul>		
<b>Disability equality duty: Specific duty</b> Does the school have a disability equality scheme? Did the school involve disabled people (pupils, staff, parents) in the development of the scheme? Does the school's scheme show :		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how disabled people have been involved?</li> <li>• how information is gathered on the effect of the school's policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-recruitment, retention of disabled staff?</li> <li>-opportunities for, achievements of disabled pupils?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• how the school assesses the impact of its policies, current or proposed, on disability equality?</li> <li>• the steps it is going to take to meet the general duty (the school's action plan)?</li> <li>• how information will be used to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes?</li> </ul>		
<p>Did the school implement the actions in its scheme within three years?</p>		
<p>Does the GB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• report on its scheme annually?</li> <li>• review and revise its scheme every three years?</li> </ul>		

## APPENDIX 2 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](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)