



QEII School

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

FOREWORD

Valuing diversity is central to achieving the overall aim of QEII School as set out in the school aims and mission statement.

The governing body of QEII is therefore pleased to publish its Disability Equality Scheme. 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 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 it to make real and tangible changes to how we conduct our business that will make a positive difference to the lives of disabled people. Promoting disability equality in QEII will be a continuous process. It will be undertaken in partnership with the wider community and of course with disabled people themselves. 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 disabled people to achieve disability equality in QEII School.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The duty to promote disability equality

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was a landmark in equality legislation, making it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of his or her disability. It also required organisations to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that a disabled person could take a job, continue to work for an organisation or access services.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amended the 1995 legislation. It introduced the duty to promote disability equality, which partly parallels the duty to promote race equality introduced under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The duty to promote disability equality contains two elements – a general duty for all public bodies and a specific duty, which applies to a more limited number of specified public authorities, including maintained schools. The Code of Practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) states that the “overarching goal of the duty is to promote equality of opportunity”. In many cases the disadvantage and discrimination that disabled people experience arise from attitudinal and environmental barriers. The duty to promote disability equality aims to overcome these barriers.

This Scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life in the wider community and in the non-educational services they might provide.

This Scheme builds on our accessibility plan and develops our work further to include:

- A definition of both disability and inclusion that is wider than special educational needs* and applies to all vulnerable groups
- Taking a proactive approach in making reasonable adjustments
- Work with pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Involving the views of disabled pupils, their carers and staff where appropriate in identifying priority actions within the school improvement plan.

1.2 The general duty

The general duty to promote disability equality places a duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons

* the legislation includes in the definition of SEN any pupil who has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of peers or a disability preventing or hindering access to educational facilities

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

1.3 The Specific Duty

The specific duty requires a designated public authority (which includes schools) to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES), setting out how it will fulfil its general and specific duties to promote disability equality. Disabled people must be involved in the development of the Scheme.

2. VISION AND VALUES

2.1 Our vision and values

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

To enable the individual to achieve his/her maximum potential by providing an appropriate teaching and learning environment and a curriculum which is broad, balanced and relevant to the individual.

To provide equal opportunities for all.

To ensure the individual's educational placement is appropriate.

To develop independence, confidence and self esteem.

To foster in the individual a pride in achievement, a feeling of success, together with consideration towards others.

To work in partnership with parents and carers and provide support for families

To prepare the student for a smooth transition to adult life.

To be a valued part of the local community.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our school is committed to positive approaches.

Every pupil is given the opportunity to learn in an environment that is safe, caring and enjoyable and where the pupil may progress towards independence.

We are committed to fulfilling the aims of our school and to following the principles set out in our Pupil Charter.

Parents and other professionals are encouraged to share in and contribute to the life of the school. The school also has an important role to play in the local community and strives to increase links with other establishments.

PUPIL CHARTER

See me as a person

Allow me to keep my dignity

Show me respect

Acknowledge my right to privacy

Recognise my strengths and weaknesses

Talk to me not about me

Help me to develop my own interests

Encourage me to behave appropriately

Ensure the opportunity for me to make appropriate choices

Encourage me to dress in an age appropriate manner

Be sensitive to my needs and feelings

Recognise my individuality

Let me know, in advance, what is going to happen to me

Don't cuddle or touch me inappropriately and encourage me not to do so to others

2.2 Who do we mean by "disabled people"?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition of a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes 'hidden' impairments, such as mental illness, dyslexia, autism, speech & language, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), diabetes, or epilepsy. Substantial means "more than minor or trivial" and long-term means lasting or expected to last 12 months or more.

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, eg

- 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.

QEII school caters for pupils with a wide range of disabilities, in particular profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and complex needs such as autism. The school governing body and senior managers collect information regarding staff and pupil headcount by gender, disability, age and ethnicity, including data and other information on staff recruitment and progression. The school seeks to collect this information sensitively and confidentially, while encouraging disclosure.

2.3 Discrimination Disabled People Face

Disabled people are discriminated against in a number of different ways. These include

- Discriminatory attitudes
- A lack of accessible information
- Inaccessible environments
- Services that have not been designed to take account of the needs of disabled people.

2.4 Action To Date

Our Disability Equality Scheme will take a fundamental step in removing these discriminatory barriers for disabled people in QEII School. The Scheme builds on what we have done already to promote equality for disabled people.

For example we have adopted:

- An Accessibility Plan which aims to
 - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
 - Improve the physical environment in QEII to increase opportunities for disabled pupils
 - Ensure that disabled children are provided with information in formats that are accessible for them
- An Equal Opportunities Policy
- AN SEN Policy

3. INVOLVEMENT

3.1 INVOLVEMENT OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN DEVELOPING THE SCHEME

Pupils, parents, staff and stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to this scheme and are given opportunities through formal and informal meetings, such as the student council and annual questionnaires.

3.2 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers

The school works in multi-disciplinary way which enables all pupils, staff and parent carers to have a voice. The following arrangements are examples of the more formal approaches adopted by the school.

- Student Council
- Pupil and parent involvement in IEP targets and evaluation
- Annual Review Meetings
- Parent evenings and open days
- Parent partnership committee
- Annual questionnaires to students, parents and regular stakeholder questionnaires
- Life plan meetings for transition to adult services
- CAF (Common Assessment Framework) Team around the child and team around the school meetings
- Intensive team around the child to support challenging behaviour

- Parent support groups and drop in mornings

3.3 The Governing Body

The school is committed to selecting governors from a wide range of backgrounds that enable the school to be fully supported eg. the Mencap governor. The membership includes parents, the school medical officer, a county councillor and governors from a range of useful professions. They are allocated duties that make best use of their experiences. Details of governors are clearly visible in school and on the school website. Minutes of meetings are available for information.

3.6 Eliminating harassment and bullying

Please refer to the school's behaviour policy for information on bullying.

3.7 Reasonable Adjustments

The school plans for all pupils on an individual basis and this ensures that they are able to access fully the whole curriculum and wide range of opportunities and activities on offer. This is supported by detailed risk assessment and planning such as manual handling plans, healthcare plans, transport care plans and intimate care plans

3.8 School Facility Lettings

The school is available for community use and fully accessible.

3.9 Information, Performance and Evidence

a. Pupil Achievement

The school collects a range of data on pupil achievement which is used to inform planning for individuals and school improvement. The data collected includes: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, P-Level and National Curriculum Levels which are recorded on the CASPA system and used comparatively to inform school improvement, Accredited schemes such as ASDAN Transition Challenge and Towards Independence and the Arts Award for Key Stage 4 students.

b. Learning Opportunities

QEII School offers an innovative curriculum framework based on the early years foundation stage and programmes of study from the National Curriculum. The curriculum is differentiated to meet individual needs and offers a wide range of opportunities both in school, offsite and extended

schools activities. The school is committed to delivering the curriculum through extensive use of creative arts and has recently achieved the Gold Artsmark Award. The school also prides itself on providing outreach opportunities for pupils in their local mainstream schools and colleges and inreach opportunities to support pupils with SEN in the Horsham area.

c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions (including Behaviour cases)

Pupils are admitted to QEII with statements of special educational needs or on an assessment place. There have been no recent exclusions and our whole school positive approach to behaviour aims to ensure that pupils are not excluded except in extreme circumstances.

c. Social Relationships

Our outreach opportunities aim to provide pupils with opportunities for developing social relationships with their mainstream peers. Also a range of pupils are welcomed into school to promote this and the school benefits from inclusive opportunities to perform with their mainstream peers at a range of events throughout the year. The school also looks to support from the child disability team for schemes such as the buddies scheme which enables young adults to mix socially out of school.

4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

QEII School recognises the importance of assessing the impact of its current policies and practices on disability equality, in order to ensure that they do not have an adverse impact on its disabled stakeholders and to inform future planning.

QEII School therefore regularly monitors the impact of the school's policies. This is captured by means of the school's equalities monitoring process which involves

- Consultation with disabled stakeholders, in order that areas for change can be identified
- Analysis of information from data collection relating to disability.

This Disability Equality Scheme is a working document and therefore one which will be subject to review and alteration in response to the school's impact assessments, and views expressed by its disabled members, and will be used to drive forward the promotion of disability equality. It will therefore be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve the school's vision of a welcoming and diverse community.

5. OUR PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED IN THE ACTION PLAN

Access to the curriculum

Behaviour and exclusions – To introduce Team Teach for all staff

Teaching and Learning - To ensure that staff have access to a range of teaching and learning strategies to enable all pupils to make progress for example, TEACCH, PECS, Intensive interaction, sensory integration etc.

Curriculum – To ensure full access to the curriculum and extended curriculum through detailed planning and risk assessment.

Data collection, monitoring and assessment – To continue to use CASPA data, IEP data and classroom observation data to monitor and evaluate pupil progress and to raise pupil achievement.

Participation and engagement

Engaging disabled pupils, staff, parents and local community developing a voice (parents and governing body) – To ensure that all pupils, parents and stakeholders have an effective voice, using advocacy when appropriate.

Eliminating harassment and bullying – To continue to monitor pupil behaviour through whole staff behaviour meetings and a positive, consistent approach that reduces challenging behaviour and any incidents of bullying.

Employment

Employing and promoting, training disabled staff

The school does not discriminate against staff who count as disabled under the DDA 2005. The school provides reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and allows disabled staff additional time off for treatment for their condition without penalising them.

Access to information and services

Lunchtime or after school clubs and trips – All parents are informed about extended opportunities for pupils outside of school hours. The school is seeking to use Go4it funding to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged.

Medical and personal care needs / Health and Safety - The school has a range of policies to ensure that all medical and personal care needs are met effectively and sensitively and that the health and safety of all pupils is protected at all times.

Admissions, Transitions - Pupil admission and transitions are carefully planned for each individual.

Physical access

Lettings and use of building by community – The school is fully accessible to all.

Information we will collect

This scheme will monitor -

**Disabled pupil attainment
Effectiveness of reasonable adjustments
Recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff
Admissions of disabled pupils
Exclusion of disabled pupils**

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.

Looking ahead

We are aware of the following major challenges for our school that may impact on our work to promote disability equality:

Our major building programme to provide new offices, a welcome reception area and therapy room, a performing arts studio and more accessible entry and car parking arrangements.

Action plan

Our priority actions are included in our school improvement plan

6. MAKING IT HAPPEN

6. 1 Implementation

This Disability Equality Scheme represents the school's vision backed up by key actions which will be carried out within the next three years. There will be:

- Clear allocation of lead responsibility
- Clear allocation of resources
- Indication of expected outcomes
- Clear timescales
- Specified time-scale for process and review:

The school will monitor and review this scheme annually. The school governing body will present findings annually, to all members of the school community, and available in alternative forms of communication which are appropriate to the needs of its disabled members.

6.2 Evaluation

There will be internal evaluation of this scheme as above, and also with the school improvement partner and OFSTED. Evaluation of this scheme will therefore be incorporated into the OFSTED SEF, as will the data giving information on the number of disabled pupils in the school, and their achievements.

6. 3 Publication

This document is published in conjunction with the school's Access Plan and forms part of the school's improvement plan and equal opportunities policy.

6. 4 Reporting

There will be an annual report on this scheme via the review of the School Improvement plan demonstrating:

- Progress made
- Outcomes achieved
- Work in progress
- Amendments to the scheme.

6. 5 Links with other school plans and policies:

This Scheme is to be read in conjunction with the School Access Plan. Together, they are intrinsic to:

1. The School Improvement Plan
2. The Equal Opportunities Policy
3. Equalities Monitoring procedure
4. Behaviour / Anti-Bullying Policy
5. Protection of Employees and associated documents (including Bullying and Harassment)

If you need further copies of this document, or would like the document in another format, such as enlarged print, Braille, audio tape or another language, please contact: the school office.