

**Bilbrook Church of England Middle School**  
**Disability Equality Scheme and Access Plan 2007 – 2010**

**1 The purpose of this scheme**

The purpose of this scheme is to show how the school is going to meet the duty to promote disability equality for disabled pupils, staff and parents.

The **Disability Equality Duty** requires schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote the equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- 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 duty applies to schools' duties as they relate to disabled pupils, staff, parents and carers, and other users of the school.

As part of this duty, schools are required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme which explains how we are meeting our duties and what we plan to do over the next 3 years.

This duty is a central part of the school's vision *to enable all our pupils to develop as lifelong learners*, and our school's aims *to ensure that our pupils stay safe, are healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to the community, and develop economic well-being*. As a church school we aim to be inclusive in all that we do for all members of our community and disability equality is an essential part of this commitment.

### **The definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

A person is considered to have a disability if they have *a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.*

Physical impairment includes sensory impairments

Mental impairments includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness

Substantial means more than minor or trivial

Long-term is defined as 12 months or more

The effect on normal day to day activities is on one or more of the following:

Mobility

Manual dexterity

Physical co-ordination

Continence

Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move every day objects

Speech, hearing or eyesight

Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand

Perception of risk of physical danger

### **Duties in relation to employment in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

It is unlawful for employers to discriminate against disabled employees and disabled people who apply for a job. It is discrimination if an employer:

- Treats a disabled employee or applicant less favourably than another on the ground of the disabled person's disability (direct discrimination)
- Fails to take reasonable steps to avoid placing a disabled employee or applicant at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments duty')
- Treats a disabled employee or applicant less favourably than another for reason related to their disability and without justification ('disability-related discrimination')

### **Duties towards disabled pupils in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005**

It is unlawful for schools to discriminate against disabled pupils. A school may be judged to discriminate if:

- It treats a disabled pupil or prospective pupil less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification (the 'less favourable treatment' duty)
- It fails, without justification, to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments' duty)

## **2 Involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents**

To achieve an inclusive environment for everyone it is important that all users of our school have a voice. Where adjustments need to be made, the best people to inform those decisions are the people with disabilities. In the initial development of the scheme and in its further development, different groups have been identified for consultation. These include some disabled pupils across the year groups and with a range of disabilities, disabled parents and parents of disabled pupils, staff and governors with disabilities, and other users of the school, specifically volunteers such as adult mentors. The school currently has no outside lettings and the school building is not used by anyone not directly related to the core business of the school.

This consultation has enabled us to consider what barriers exist and possible ways to overcome these barriers, particularly in relation to

- Being able to move around the building easily and confidently
- Being able to have an equal opportunity to access the lessons and activities in school life
- Feeling confident that methods of communication between home and school are effective and take account of preferred means of communication
- Feeling confident that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture for all members of the school and users of the school

*We recognise that systems to involve disabled users of our school in ensuring that the school complies with the Act need to develop further. For instance, at any point where there is a letting to an outside agency, we shall need to consult with that group. We shall also need to make sure that we regularly review our systems of communication.*

### **3 Information gathering**

#### **Introduction**

In this section, we will deal with the following issues:

- How have we identified disabled pupils, staff and parents?
- How have we gathered information on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled staff?
- How have we gathered information on the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils?
- What does our information tell us about the accessibility of the building, the access to the curriculum, communication between home and school and the achievements of disabled pupils?

In putting together this first scheme it has been recognised that there is some difficulty in gathering information because currently there is:

- A lack of understanding about the breadth of the DDA definition of disability
- A reluctance to disclose an impairment
- A concern about what the information will be used for

In gathering the information, we have therefore taken steps to:

- Provide simple information on the definition of disability in the DDA
- Be positive about adjustments that can be made and the benefits of these
- Explain why information is needed
- Reassure pupils, staff and parents about confidentiality
- Ensure that the ethos of the school is conducive to disclosure

*We recognise that we need to improve our systems for gathering meaningful information and this is part of our action plan for the next 3 years.*

#### **How have we identified pupils, parents and adults with disability?**

- Pupils have been identified using the description in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The list includes all the pupils on the Special Educational Needs register. In addition we have included all pupils with a known medical condition. Finally, staff have been asked to identify any other pupils who they think fit the description. This list is now available to all staff. For all new pupils into school, the decision on whether to include them on the disability list is based on pupil admission information including SEN records.
- Staff have the opportunity to disclose any disability to the headteacher in confidence. New staff have this opportunity at the application stage and on appointment (we follow the county's guidance on recruitment).
- Governors have the opportunity to disclose any disability to the headteacher in confidence.

### **How we have gathered information on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees:**

As part of the introduction of this scheme, all existing employees have been given the opportunity to disclose impairments and discuss barriers to their ability to engage in day to day activities. All future employees will be given the opportunity to make disclosures about their impairments and discuss possible ways in which any potential barriers can be overcome.

*These systems to allow for disclosure and discussions will be written into school HR policies when they are reviewed over the next 2 years.*

As part of the Performance Management process in school, discussions with individual staff with a disability will include the following:

- The school's support for their particular disability,
- The effectiveness of any activities to reduce barriers
- The individual's own success in carrying out their duties in school

*The requirement to gather this information will be written into the Performance Management policies when they are reviewed over the next 2 years.*

### **How have we gathered information on educational opportunities available to disabled pupils and the achievements of disabled pupils**

The following information is used to help make judgements about the effectiveness of inclusion measures in the school for disabled pupils:

- Analysis of data relating to academic achievement, including progress, value added and comparative data
- Analysis of attendance data
- Records of achievement
- Analysis of awards (house points, green cards etc)
- Analysis of range of extra-curricular and enhancement activities
- Analysis of participation in extra-curricular and enhancement activities
- Analysis of sanctions: pupils sent out of class, detentions, isolations, exclusions
- Analysis of pupils requiring behaviour support, including involvement of outside agencies
- SEN reviews
- Reports
- Self review process
- Pupil satisfaction ratings through the School Council and pupil surveys
- Parent satisfaction ratings through annual survey and open meetings and informal feed-back

*The requirement to gather this information on disabled pupils and act on any outcomes will be written into the following policies when they are reviewed over the next 2 years: behaviour; attendance; curriculum; equal opportunities; assessment, recording and reporting; special educational needs.*

### **What does our information tell us about the accessibility of the school building?**

- Our school was identified as a Pathway school for the Local Authority in 2003 and appropriate adjustments were made to the building in the following year. The building is now fully accessible for those with mobility problems and has toilet facilities for disabled people. Ramps and wide doors are fitted and there is a marked space for car users who need to park close to the building. There is a lift to the dining area to avoid a short flight of steps.

- We have an induction loop fitted into one classroom.
- Some adjustments have been made for pupils with visual impairment to have visual supports around the building.

***What else do we need to do to improve the accessibility of the building?***

- *Any further building projects to develop the school building will take account of the needs of disabled pupils, staff and other school users.*
- *Make any appropriate and reasonable adjustments to the building in the light of feedback from disabled pupils and other adults.*

**What does our information tell us about access to the curriculum?**

- We are a level one dyslexia friendly school.
- We have the national mentoring scheme award
- Our curriculum policy is committed to enabling access to the curriculum, including enrichment and enhancement activities for all pupils.
- The curriculum covers issues of disability, behaviour, relationships, and bullying.
- Our induction process enables us to identify disabled pupils early and work with the family prior to their starting at the school so that the pupils can settle in as quickly as possible.
- Data analysis demonstrates that our special needs pupils do as well as other groups of pupils in the core subjects at key stage 2.
- We have developed our teaching and learning strategies so that there is a great emphasis on individual learning targets linked to the national curriculum, which are closely monitored, and a range of teaching styles to cater for a range of learning styles.
- There are IEPs in place for all SEN pupils. These plans are closely monitored and form the basis for support in school for the pupil.
- There are PSPs in place for pupils with behavioural problems. These are closely monitored and form the basis for support in school for the individual pupil.
- We access a very wide range of support from outside agencies for our SEN pupils and pupils with behavioural problems. The support includes the educational psychologist, CAMHS, Autism Outreach, SENSS team, YISP project, behaviour support team, school nurse, Parent Partnership, and many more as appropriate. The advice from these support agencies informs staff of the best ways to make reasonable adjustments for the individual pupils.
- We provide in-house support by teaching assistants for pupils with dyslexia and pupils with below expected reading levels. We are introducing in-house support for pupils with dyspraxia.
- We have a full time inclusion manager who runs the behaviour support unit. She delivers a range of intervention strategies to support pupils with emotional and behavioural problems, and the base is used to provide reasonable adjustments for some pupils (eg a quiet base for break and lunch times).
- We have an agreed behaviour code, a behaviour contract and an anti-bullying policy
- We have a confidential line for pupils to use for bullying
- We have adult mentors who work with pupils with particular emotional or behavioural issues.
- Teaching assistants are well trained and work in close collaboration with teaching staff to make sure that pupils are appropriately supported.
- All pupils who qualify are supported by adult readers in external tests.
- ICT is used as an aid where appropriate, eg Alphasmarts and laptops.
- ICT facilities allow magnified screens, coloured backgrounds and text with suitable font and colour, and auditory support for pupils.

- Current analysis indicates that disabled pupils are accessing enrichment and enhancement activities to the same extent as other pupils. Strategies to enable this to happen include encouraging parents to attend school trips (eg a boy with ADHD; a girl who is a long-term school refuser), risk assessments with parents (eg diabetic pupil enabled to go on an activity weekend by careful planning between parents and school staff), use of teaching assistants to support an individual pupil on a school trip, enabling pupils to participate during the day when they are not able to stay full-time on a residential trip, ensuring that there is a range of activities to suit a wide range of interests, and reasonable adjustments within activities (eg PE lessons).

***How can we improve access to the curriculum?***

- *Further developments to support disabled pupils at lunchtimes*
- *Further developments to enable disabled pupils to participate in trips, particularly the residential trip to Stanley Head Outdoor Education Centre*
- *Lesson planning will be developed to ensure that reasonable adjustments are being made for pupils with disabilities*
- *Future analysis of data relating to academic achievement, progress and engagement in other activities will include analysis of all disabled pupils*
- *Review curriculum policies to ensure they comply with the DDA requirements*
- *Review PSHCE curriculum in the light of the Disability Equality Scheme*
- *Review behaviour and anti-bullying policies in the light of the DES*
- *Continually review access in the light of feedback from parents and pupils in relation to their own particular needs*

**What does our information tell us about communication between home and school?**

- There is a weekly newsletter for parents and it is available on the school website. We have already adapted the style of the newsletter to accommodate the needs of readers with dyslexia, and we are considering further changes to make it as readable and accessible as possible.
- There is an interim report and an annual written report. There are 3 parents' consultation sessions each year. Feedback on these systems is encouraged from parents, and satisfaction with the systems is good. Some changes to these systems have been made over the last 2 years, and as a result there has been some improvement in attendance at the mid-year consultation.
- In the majority of cases, issues involving pupils are discussed with parents by phone and personal meetings. Letters are used only as a last resort or to back up formal situations such as exclusions.
- We have an annual survey of parents and an annual open meeting where we discuss whole-school issues.
- All parents are offered the opportunity to speak to teachers to discuss pupils' progress and any issues there may be.
- We go out to parents if necessary to talk to them in their home if there are issues which prevent them from coming into school.

***How can we improve communication between home and school?***

- *Ensure the newsletter can be accessed through a screen reader. Inform parents about how they can use this so that the text of the newsletter can be read aloud at home when accessed through the website.*
- *Continue to review reports and parent consultation sessions in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.*
- *We will constantly review communication in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.*

#### **4 Impact assessment**

The effectiveness of our policies and adjustments will be monitored regularly in the following ways:

- Feedback from disabled pupils and users of the school through pupil interviews, discussion at school council, the annual questionnaire to parents, staff performance management meetings and agenda-ed discussion at governors' meetings.
- An annual review of the action plan by the Governors' Staffing and Curriculum Committee and report to the full Governing Body.
- Through the review of policies on the cycle agreed by the governors.
- When new pupils are admitted to the school.
- As appropriate at any other time of the year by the school's Leadership Team and the Governors when issues arise.

#### **5 Revision of the scheme**

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed in three years, that is in 2010. The scheme will be reviewed in the light of the ongoing reviews and developments over the next 3 years.

#### **6 Publication of the scheme**

The scheme will be made available to all parents, carers and users of the school. It will be available on the school website [www.bilbrook.staffs.sch.uk](http://www.bilbrook.staffs.sch.uk) and paper copies will be provided on request from the school office.

**Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2007 – 2010**

Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Outcome
<p><b>Lettings to an outside agency:</b> Consultation with respect to accessibility and reasonable adjustments</p>	<p>Headteacher</p>	<p>At the point when a letting is agreed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled people are able to participate in the activities</li> <li>• There is a welcoming and inclusive culture in the school</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication between home and school:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the newsletter can be accessed through a screen reader. Inform parents about how they can use this so that the text of the newsletter can be read aloud at home when accessed through the website.</li> <li>• Continue to review reports and parent consultation sessions in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.</li> <li>• We will continually review communication in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of ICT</li>   <li>• Headteacher and leadership team</li>   <li>• Headteacher and leadership team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By September 2008</li>   <li>• Ongoing</li>   <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are confident that they are able to access communications from school and are therefore well informed</li> <li>• Are able to provide the necessary support for their children to succeed and be happy at school</li> <li>• Feel that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture</li> </ul>

<p><b>Gathering information:</b> Continue to develop and improve our systems for gathering meaningful information on disability and reasonable adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual SEN reviews</li> <li>• PSP reviews</li> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Parental questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENCO</li> <li>• Inclusion Manager</li> <li>• Assistant Headteachers;</li> <li>• Headteacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• February/March 08/09/10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils, staff, parents and other adults communicate with us about their needs</li> <li>• The school knows and understands what are the needs of our disabled people</li> <li>• The school is able to consider how to respond to those needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gathering information: recruitment of staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All future employees will be given the opportunity to make disclosures about their impairments and discuss possible ways in which any potential barriers can be overcome.</li> <li>• Write this into recruitment policy at point of review</li> </ul>	<p>Headteacher and governors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With immediate effect</li> <li>• At the point of policy review: May 2009</li> </ul>	<p>Disabled staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are able to move around the building easily and confidently</li> <li>• Are able to have an equal opportunity to access activities in school life</li> <li>• Feel confident that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture for all</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gathering information: Performance Management:</b> As part of the Performance Management process in school, discussions with individual staff with a disability will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's support for their particular disability,</li> <li>• The effectiveness of any activities to reduce barriers</li> <li>• The individual's own success</li> </ul>	<p>Headteacher and performance management team leaders</p>	<p>With immediate effect</p>	<p>Account is taken of disabilities and reasonable adjustments are made so that disabled staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are able to move around the building easily and confidently</li> <li>• Are able to have an equal opportunity to access activities in school life</li> <li>• Are able to fulfil their duties</li> </ul>

<p>in carrying out their duties in school</p> <p>The Performance Management Policy will be reviewed in the light of this scheme</p>	Headteacher and governors	At the point of policy review summer 2009	<p>in school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel confident that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture for all</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gathering information: policies:</b> The requirement to gather information on disabled pupils and act on any outcomes will be written into the following policies when they are reviewed over the next 2 years: behaviour; attendance; curriculum; equal opportunities; assessment, recording and reporting; special educational needs, and any others as appropriate.</p>	Headteacher and governors	As appropriate over the next 3 years	Policies and practices support the school's commitment to the inclusion of disabled pupils fully in the life of the school
<p><b>Access to the building:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any further building projects to develop the school building will take account of the needs of disabled pupils, staff and other school users.</li> <li>• Make any appropriate and reasonable adjustments to the building in the light of feedback from disabled pupils and other adults.</li> </ul>	Headteacher and governors	As appropriate over the next 3 years	Disabled pupils, staff, parents and other adult users are able to move around the building easily and confidently

<p><b>Accessibility to the curriculum:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further developments to support disabled pupils at lunchtimes</li> <li>• Further developments to enable disabled pupils to participate in trips, particularly the residential trip to Stanley Head Outdoor Education Centre</li> <li>• Lesson planning will be developed to ensure that reasonable adjustments are being made for pupils with disabilities</li> <li>• Future analysis of data relating to academic achievement, progress and engagement in other activities will include analysis of all disabled pupils</li> <li>• Review curriculum policies to ensure they comply with the DDA requirements</li> <li>• Review PSHCE curriculum in the light of the Disability Equality Scheme</li> <li>• Review behaviour and anti-bullying policies in the light of the DES</li> <li>• Continually review access in the light of feedback from parents and pupils in relation to their own particular needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher, Heads of Year and Inclusion Manager</li> <li>• Headteacher, visits organisers, and Assistant Headteacher</li> <li>• Subject leaders</li> <li>• Subject leaders</li> <li>• Headteacher and governors</li> <li>• Deputy Headteacher and governors</li> <li>• Headteacher and governors</li> <li>• Headteacher, SENCO and senior staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With immediate effect</li> <li>• With immediate effect</li> <li>• With immediate effect</li> <li>• With immediate effect</li> <li>• As appropriate over the next 3 years when the policies come up for review</li> <li>• As appropriate over the next 3 years when the policy comes up for review</li> <li>• As appropriate over the next 3 years when the policies come up for review</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<p>Disabled pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have an equal opportunity to access the lessons and activities in school life</li> <li>• Take part in curriculum activities and participate in enrichment activities</li> <li>• Are making at least expected progress</li> <li>• Feel that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Communication between home and school:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the newsletter can be accessed through a screen reader. Inform parents about how they can use this so that the text of the newsletter can be read aloud at home when accessed through the website.</li> <li>• Continue to review reports and parent consultation sessions in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.</li> <li>• We will constantly review communication in the light of feedback from parents in relation to their own particular needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of ICT</li> <li>• Headteacher and leadership team</li> <li>• Headteacher and leadership team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By September 2008</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>	<p>Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are confident that they are able to access communications from school and are therefore well informed</li> <li>• Are able to provide the necessary support for their children to succeed and be happy at school</li> <li>• Feel that the school has a welcoming and inclusive culture</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review and evaluation of impact:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing review in response to feedback</li> <li>• Annual review of provision</li> <li>• Review of the DES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher, leadership team and governors</li> <li>• Headteacher and governors</li> <li>• Governors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Summer term 08/09</li> <li>• 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the school is taking action in line with the action plan</li> <li>• Ensure the school is responding appropriately to any issues raised through the feedback systems</li> <li>• Evaluate the impact of the scheme and plan for the future</li> </ul>