



DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY

Consultation History

Governors/staff/parents/students	Date
Executive (Leadership Group)	
Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff	
Students and HR/H&S Committee	
Full Governing Body	
Next Review of Policy	

Disability Equality Policy

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Disability Equality Policy

Mission Statement

At The Ridgeway School 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 The Ridgeway School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Check List for School Staff and Governors

- 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 any 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 that parents or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats that 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? How do you ensure people are aware of how the governing body contributes to the life of the school?
- What does the school do to improve social relationships between disabled pupils and non-disabled pupils – can this be monitored, how can you show improvements?

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

What do you understand by 'Disability'?

"Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities" (DDA 1995 Part 1 para. 1.1.) This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act:-

- **People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis**
- **For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.**

The **Disability Equality in Education (DEE)** recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

The Ridgeway School "**recognises that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in the education system and in society as a whole**"

For other definitions see the Disability Rights Commission website or the SEN Code of Practice

This school therefore uses the social model of disability throughout our work. We understand that the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility criteria for special educational needs provision. This means that disabled pupils may or may not have special educational needs.

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.

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.

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

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

The Ridgeway School has consulted with disabled pupils, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme by:

The following methods will be used to consult with disabled pupils / staff / parents to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality over the next three years via:

- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
- Feedback slips
- Drop-in sessions

Make Things Happen

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, The Ridgeway 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

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
 - Increase awareness of the ways in which parents of disabled children and young people can help to support their learning, for example through workshops;
 - Ensuring that the talents of disabled pupils are represented accordingly through the Gifted and Talented Registers.
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
 - Monitor incidents of harassment and bullying of disabled pupils. Encourage pupils to report and take action against offenders.
 - If a number of incidents have been prevalent within a particular year group, use circle time, story time or assembly to investigate and address the issue with all pupils.

- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
 - Use the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability. Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials.
 - Celebrate and highlight key events such as the Paralympics, Deaf Awareness Week and Learning Disability Week.
 - At schools with specialist units, staff have successfully raised awareness about disability by going to talk to pupils from the mainstream school.

- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
 - Ensure that disabled pupils are represented and encouraged to participate in class assemblies, plays, events and on the school council.

Section 1: How does the School deliver the curriculum?

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Comments
Do we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils?	✓			Regular training updates on TD Days
Are classrooms organised for all learners e.g. sensory impaired, physically impaired, etc?			✓	All curriculum areas are accessible to hearing impaired (Soundfield systems in 39 rooms). Visual and physical impairment access not fully addressed
Do lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve?	✓			Inclusion addressed
Are lessons differentiated to address the diverse needs of all pupils?	✓			Pathways curriculum adopted
Do lessons involve work to be done by individuals, pairs, groups and the whole class?	✓			'Inspiring learners to achieve' is a clear goal
Are all pupils encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities?	✓			Enrichment and extensive extra-curricular programme
Do staff recognise and allow for additional time required by some disabled pupils to use equipment in practical work?	✓			TA support provided where necessary
Do staff provide alternative ways of giving access to experience or understanding for disabled pupils who cannot engage in particular activities, for example some forms of exercise in physical education?	✓			Training provided as required
Do you provide access to computer technology appropriate for students with disabilities?			✓	Additional hearing equipment for hearing impaired pupils.
Are school visits, including overseas visits, made accessible to all pupils irrespective of attainment or impairment?	✓			TA support provided. All pupils have opportunity to access school visits
Are there high expectations of all pupils?	✓			FFT D targets
Do staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation?	✓			'Inspiring learners to achieve' is a clear goal

Section 2: Is your school designed to meet the needs of all students?

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Comments
Does the size and layout of areas- including all academic, sporting, play, social facilities; classrooms, the assembly hall, canteen, library, gymnasium and outdoor sporting facilities, playgrounds and common rooms – allow access for all pupils?			✓	Restriction of physical access to some areas due to design of buildings – this being addressed over time as resources become available.
Can pupils who use wheelchairs move around the school without experiencing barriers to access such as those caused by doorways, steps and stairs, toilet facilities and showers?			✓	School is built on seven different ground levels. One building is fully accessible, other buildings are only partially accessible.
Are pathways of travel around the school site and parking arrangements safe, routes logical and well-signed?			✓	Parts of site are easily accessible, others are not. Parking arrangements are difficult due to lack of space.
Are emergency and evacuation systems set up to inform ALL pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities, including alarms with both visual and auditory components?			✓	Hearing impaired unit set up with visual alarm system, Deaf alerter system also used. Pupils with visual impairment not yet provided for.
Are non-visual guides used, to assist people to use buildings including lifts with tactile buttons?		✓		Not yet addressed
Could any of the décor or signage be considered to be confusing or disorientating for disabled pupils with visual impairment, autism or epilepsy?			✓	Emergency signage is well lit and obvious. Other signage may need improvement.
Are areas to which pupils should have access well lit?	✓			
Are steps made to reduce background noise for hearing impaired pupils such as considering a room's acoustics and noisy equipment?			✓	Not all rooms have been addressed. New buildings are subject to new regulations.

Section 3: How does the school deliver materials in other formats?

Question	Yes	No	Partly	Comments
Does the school provide information in simple language, symbols, large print, on audiotape or in Braille for pupils and prospective pupils who may have difficulty with standard forms of printed information?		✓		Not yet addressed
Is information presented to groups in a way which is user friendly for pupils with disabilities e.g. by reading aloud overhead projections and describing diagrams?	✓			Signing for hearing impaired pupils
Are there facilities such as ICT to produce information in different formats?	✓			Website
Are staff made aware of technology and practices developed to assist people with disabilities?	✓			Regular information given to staff on TD days

Access Plan

	Objective	Implementation	Timing	Personnel	Resources	Success Criteria
1	All specialist provision accessible	Specialist rooms accessible by lift or on ground floor	2008	Deputy Head leads Faculty location review	Devolved Capital/Repairs and Maintenance	Access fully addressed for each subject area
2	Routeways more accessible to parents	Ramp to Front Doors and to Centre Court	2008	Wessex Training/Site Team	Site Team time Equipment budget	Access for parents improved at Parents Meetings
3	New Build to replace Mobiles and improve ground levels in social space	SBC replacement of Mobiles 2008-09	2009	Headteacher/Governors	Management time SBC Capital Funds	Improved Site Access
4	School design Access for all pupils Wheelchair access and pathways	Address all areas identified in Key barrier Survey: 1. Lift to hall/dining area, handrail to stairs & close risers	2010	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	Lift installed, stairs improved
5	Pathways around school-remove steps where possible e.g to side of Sports Hall	Address all areas identified	2011	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	Access to a range of areas improved through slopes rather than steps
6	Reception Area	Provide disabled WC facility at front of school	2010	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	Refurbishment of existing WC to provide disabled facility
7	School design Access for all pupils Wheelchair access and pathways	Drop kerbs on public highway and roads and paths within the school	2011	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	Parking and Routeway improvement. Good signage and ease of calling for assistance
8	Fire Alarms updated for visual as well as audible	All closed areas to have Alarm lights	2009	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	All areas safe for SRP students
9	Upgrade doorways for wheelchair access	Programme of door replacement	2011	Headteacher/Governors	Devolved Capital	Wider doors in all areas