



The New School
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME AND
ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

(3 year period covered: September 2014 to September 2017)

1.0 Introduction

Definition of Disability

'A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments.

The definition is broad and includes a wide range of impairments such as difficulties with mobility, coordination and manual dexterity; sight, hearing and speech and language impairments; and breathing and continence, problems as well as 'hidden' ones such as depression, dyslexia, cancer, HIV, epilepsy and autism (if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities is substantial and long term.)

An impairment does not mean a pupil is disabled. It is the effect this has on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. There is an overlap with Special Educational Needs but not all disabled pupils will have special needs. This school uses the "social model" of disability, and so recognises that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which can exist in society as a whole.

2.0 Legislation and Responsibility

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Michelle Taylor as Proprietor of the New School has three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to draw up plans to show how, over time, they will increase access to education for disabled pupils (see school accessibility plan)

However, it should be noted here that as an independent school we reserve the right (in certain circumstances) to advise parents of a disabled child that the school is unable to meet their child's needs and that their needs may be

better served elsewhere (Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 28B (6))

This Plan sets out the proposals of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

1. The physical environment of the school
2. The extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
3. The delivery of information to pupils and parents

In addition, 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;
- We would encourage participation in public life by disabled members of the New School community
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs.

This is also known as the Disability Equality Duty which is owed to all disabled pupils, staff and those using services provided by schools.

The production of this Disability Equality Scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to produce an effective Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

3.0 Purpose and Direction of the school's Disability Equality Scheme

Vision and Values

The philosophy of the New School is based on inclusive principles which strive to promote equality. Equality of opportunity at the School is about providing equal access and the highest possible achievement for all pupils within the school, as stated in the opening lines of the School's ethos:

'The New School aims to ensure that children of all abilities make excellent progress during their time with us.'

Equality of opportunity at the School is about providing equal access and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community - pupils, staff, parents and community members.

This aim would include the following expectations:

- To provide a stimulating, safe and secure environment for all.
- To promote a caring and responsible community, where everyone feels valued.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the mental, cultural, moral, spiritual and physical development of each child.
- To promote curiosity, creativity and encourage pupils to become independent thinkers and prepare for adult life.
- To develop writing skills as a tool to enhance learning across the whole curriculum to allow every child to achieve his or her potential.

These aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, disability, ability, age and social circumstances. We strive to include and engage all pupils and to prepare them for full participation in a diverse society.

For the Disability Equality Scheme we will especially eliminate discrimination, harassment related to disability, promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to take account of disabled people's disabilities so that they can be treated according to need.

Information Collected From Pupil Data and School audit

A key starting point for the school's Disability Equality Scheme is an assessment of:

- the nature of the school population;
- the nature of the school, including a consideration of the impact of the school's existing plans and priorities.
- the physical environment of the school primarily New School is a single storey building, with wheelchair access to much of the premises.

What we are already doing

We have reviewed our school and our current practices and can say:

- Information is collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff and this information is used to improve standards at the school.
- Disabled pupils are encouraged to participate in school life through representation in school events such as school assemblies and productions.
 - ***Bullying and harassment issues are monitored on a long term basis to ensure no repetition*** (sounds as if it occurs. Could it say something like *The New School does not accept bullying or harassment of any child or adult within the school community? (see bullying policy)*)
- All classrooms and communal spaces are on ground level with the exception of the upper storage area, ***which is a storage area only accessed by staff.***
- The school environment is as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school. Open evenings and other events which parents or carers attend are held in an accessible part of the school.

- Information can be made available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats which are accessible if required.
- The School Visits Policy ensures equality for disabled pupils.
- Arrangements are made for lunchtimes so that disabled pupils are not at a disadvantage
- Homework is set so that it does not disadvantage disabled pupils
- Classroom organisation ensures that the needs of disabled pupils are accommodated
- The current arrangements for Sports Day take into account the needs of disabled pupils, and parents
- The current school uniform is flexible enough not to cause problems for disabled pupils
- The recruitment procedures in place do not discourage applications from disabled persons
- The current arrangements for parental consultations consider the needs of disabled parents and can take place in the home if necessary

Future Impact Assessments on Policy & Practices

The New School is keen to ensure that none of its policies and practices disadvantage disabled people. Impact assessment in all areas will not be possible immediately. All existing policies and practices will be reviewed in accordance with the action plan.

When creating new policies or carrying out reviews of existing policies will:

- Assess their likely or possible consequences for disabled people
- Alter or amend proposed policies where necessary so that they promote disability equality and eliminate discrimination
- Identify actions arising from the policy which need to be added to the Action Plan including the collection of associated evidence on the impact of the policy and actions.

The results of assessments will be recorded as an addendum to the action plan when each policy is reviewed.

5.0 Consultation during the development of the Disability Equality Scheme

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 New School has involved disabled people in the development of this Scheme by:

- Consulting parents and carers through the school newsletter, and talking to individual parents as to their views
- Talking to all staff and seeking views.
- The scheme has been made available to all staff and parents for comments and suggestions.

All feedback will be considered by the Headmistress for inclusion in the scheme. Consultation will be organised in a way that is accessible to the particular groups who are being

6.0 Identified main priorities in the school's Disability Equality Scheme

The Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan has three main strands:

- Equality of access to the curriculum for disabled pupils.
- Improvements to the school environment to increase accessibility for disabled people.
- Improvements in the provision of information for disabled people in the event that it is required.

7.0 Achieving Those Priorities

Equality of access to the curriculum for disabled pupils

This is achieved through the School Plan. The school will also draw upon the expertise of external partners e.g. speech and language therapists and in conjunction with partner schools.

There will also be valuable contributions from curriculum planning and timetabling, the use of Learning Support and the appropriate deployment of teaching assistants and consultation with parents and carers.

For disabled pupils, consideration would always be given to particular groups, as part of normal good teaching practice, for example:

- PE for pupils with a physical impairment
- Music for hearing impaired pupils
- Easy language for pupils with learning difficulties
- Pictures and symbols for pupils with communication difficulties
- Tailored homework for dyslexic pupils
- Large print for visually impaired pupils
- Classroom organisation so disabled pupils can freely move around
- Clear signs for visually impaired pupils especially health and safety advice
- Lighting that supports lip reading and visually impaired pupils
- The self esteem of disabled pupils by promoting positive images of disabled people in books, teaching materials and the wider curriculum
- The elimination of bullying towards disabled pupils

Improving the physical environment of the school

An environment that welcomes diversity and difference and a school that learns how to improve access for disabled people will be good for all.

The New School shows consideration of disabled adults visiting the school by providing:

- Safe floors securely fixed and not over polished
- Clear signs

The School always gives consideration to improvements such as those listed below, whenever necessary:

- improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings;
- the provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access.
- enlarged computer screens and keyboards if required
- established quiet areas if necessary

Improving the delivery to disabled people of information that is provided in writing for people who are not disabled:

Information for disabled people (provided in writing for people who are not disabled) might include handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, information about school events, reports.

Improving the delivery of information might include making information available in a different format on request.

8.0 Contingency Plans

If a pupil becomes disabled whilst at the New School, we will put contingency plans into practice. We will hold:

- immediate meetings with the **parents** to determine to what extent the child's future at the New School can reasonably be assured, and for how long.
- immediate meetings for **staff** involved which will highlight these plans and discuss further possibilities.

Such plans will secure the disabled child's

- equality of access to the school and areas within
- equality of access to the curriculum

They will take into account the reaction of **fellow pupils**, and positive behaviour will be encouraged, modelled and monitored.

They will take into account the reaction of **teaching staff**, who will ensure that the disabled pupil is treated no differently – and from time to time more positively – than his/her peers, and that academic expectations remain, within reason, as high as would otherwise have been the case.

Support staff will be charged where appropriate with ensuring the disabled pupil's welfare outside the classroom, monitoring the behaviour both of and towards the pupil, reporting where necessary to the class teacher or Miss Taylor

9.0 Ensuring Compliance - Management, coordination and implementation

The Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan will be formally adopted by the proprietor.

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty, the New School has drawn up an Action Plan to make things happen, which outlines how the requirements of the DDA 2005 will be met.

It is important to monitor the impact of the action taken to ensure that progress is being made towards meeting the Disability Equality Duty, and to ensure that no adverse impact is occurring as a result of the actions.

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed and assessed annually. Amendments responding to identified issues will be made when necessary.

10.0 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 New School monitors the

- Achievement of pupils with a disability
- Disabled staff

11.0 Publication and dissemination of the School's Plan

The School makes its Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan available in the following ways:

- Publishing it on the School website
- Making it available in alternative formats on request

For further information, please contact: The Headmistress – Michelle Taylor
This Scheme and Action Plan has been agreed by the proprietor and staff.

Date September 2014 M Taylor

Date revisited September 2015 M Taylor

Date revisited August 2016 M Taylor

Review in September 2017 unless changes in legislation require immediate amendments.

Appendices A
The New School - Disability Equality Scheme & Accessibility Action Plan 2014-2017

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date Of Completion</u>	<u>Action Taken To Date</u>	<u>Success Criteria</u>	<u>Personnel</u>
Increase Knowledge Of Disability	1 & 2 Complete. 3 & 4 31.12.10	1) Staff made aware of needs of SEN children at school. 2) Written reports from speech therapist and undertake activity to improve knowledge of needs. 3) Training Awareness to be given to staff. 4) Staff to be made aware of DES.	Disability awareness raised among staff	Teaching Staff
Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people by celebrating and highlighting key events such as the Paralympics	1 & 2 & 3 Complete 4	1) Paralympics highlighted in assembly from Rio 2016 2) Poppy Day raised, war veteran visited school to discuss why raising money- annually 3) Assembly discussion about what it would be like to be blind, etc. 4) Invite people in from hearing impaired school and school for visually impaired or physically impaired	Increased awareness of disabilities and what disabled people can achieve	Teaching Staff
Monitor pupil achievement by	1-4 Ongoing	1) Questionnaire about medical	Higher achievement by	Teaching

disability and if there are trends or patterns in the data take additional action.	and part of school processes. Complete	history asked of all parents of new pupils. 2) Pupils identified with SEN and disability considered for extra support required and implemented. 3) Formative assessment identifies SEN children and monitors progress. 4) Staff are required to complete medical questionnaire identifying any disabilities.	disabled pupils	Staff
Undertake audit of School policies & procedures to establish baseline of present level of disability discrimination	Autumn term 2014	Policies will be subject of audit as they are reviewed. Reviews will take place from Autumn 2014 Ongoing	Audit Undertaken for DES	Miss Taylor
Review physical environment to improve access for disabled	July 2014	Review conducted of building & grounds –ramps needed for access to main building.	Review complete (autumn 2014)	Miss Taylor
Increase access to the physical environment by purchase of ramps	Autumn 2014	Cost of ramps to be identified.	Ramps to be bought-complete (autumn 2014)	Miss Taylor
Positive Action To Prevent bullying and process to monitor long term impact of any such trends and remedial action	Autumn 2014	1) Any evidence of bullying dealt with under Anti-bullying Policy in a positive manner 2) Record of bullying incidents maintained and reviewed six monthly for any trends	Bullying dealt with positively, policy in place, monitoring system in place	Miss Taylor
Agree procedures that collect views of reasonable adjustments by	Autumn 2014	1) School newsletter used to make all parents aware of policies	Procedures to be in place as specified	Miss Taylor

pupils with a disability, their parents/carers and advocates		including DES for comment. 2) Staff to be asked if they have any DDA views on improving reasonable adjustments 3) Parents of SEN and disabled to be seen personally to seek views on any aspects for improvements		
Agree processes for evaluating the impact of reasonable adjustments			Reasonable adjustment identified	Miss Taylor
Agree process to publish annual reports to parents on the success of the action plan in reducing discrimination and identifying further targets	Autumn 2014	1) Annual update on success of DES to be included on school website. 2) Annual update to be included in newsletter every September	Item on newsletter and website to be in place.	Miss Taylor