

EXMOOR LINK FEDERATION

(East Anstey and Bishops Nympton Primary Schools and associated Pre-Schools)

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Accessibility for all

This document is in response to the Disability Equality Duty which requires all schools to produce a Disability Equality scheme.

1. Learning Community Ethos - Vision & Values

We seek to serve the local and wider community by offering children a fully inclusive, caring and educationally rich learning environment in which to flourish as individuals. We are committed to ensuring equal treatment of all our employees, pupils, their parents/carers and any others involved in the school community and will endeavour to ensure that all are treated fairly in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

The schools in the learning community will not tolerate harassment of or discrimination against any groups or individuals within the community.

1.1

What do we 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 recognized has been removed.
- The Disability Equality in Education (DEE) organisation 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.

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 and similarly not all pupils with SEN will be considered disabled e.g. many at School Action. The school recognizes that social, educational and behavioural difficulties may be part of this definition.

2. The General Duty

We will actively seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment and bullying

- promote positive attitudes, accepting and celebrating difference
- strive to provide support which encourages individuals to fully participate at an appropriate level
- to be sensitive to the needs of individuals and to be aware of the possibility and detrimental effect of humiliation
- take steps to take account of any barriers to learning or access, even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others due to their level of need.
(DDA 2005 S.49A)

3. How we will meet the General Duty & Specific Duty

The production of this Accessibility For All document provides us with a framework for integrating equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school which we are calling Accessibility For All.

The main actions to be taken in the next three years to promote equality for all are described in the individual school's Accessibility Plan. This plan will aim to address the accessibility needs of children, parents/carers, staff and all involved in the wider school community. This plan will run in conjunction with the School Development Plans and will be subject to revision and amendment at the end of the three year period.

3.1 The role of pupils, staff and parents/carers in the Scheme

The schools within the learning community regularly seek the views of parents, pupils and staff in a variety of ways. In addition, for the purpose of this scheme, we will be asking parents/carers, staff and governors to give their views by completing a questionnaire. Dedicated parents', governors and staff meetings will be held to ensure that all have the opportunity to be involved in the process and the views of pupils will be sought via School Council meetings.

3.2 The Governing Body

Governing body minutes are accessible and the language is kept as clear as possible. The names and contacts for all Governors are available from the school. When a position for parent governor becomes vacant **all** parents are invited to stand and statutory procedures for elections are held. The literature makes it clear that we welcome applications from **any** parents who wish to stand.

3.3 Removing barriers

All schools in the community will endeavour to make the physical environment, the curriculum, extra curricular opportunities and communications more accessible to all pupils, parents/carers, staff and the community and this is reflected in the accessibility plan.

The points outlined in the general duty are actively promoted through relevant policies, direct teaching, careful choice and use of teaching resources and by high standards and expectations of behaviour and attitude.

3.4 Reasonable Adjustments

The DDA requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all pupils, visitors and members of the school community are able to access the same opportunities. The individual schools will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments. Not taking "reasonable steps" to avoid putting the aforementioned at a substantial disadvantage can only be justified if there is a

reason that is both material and substantial to the particular case. The school can take account of the;

- The needs to maintain academic and other standards
- Money available
- Practicalities of making the particular adjustment
- Health and safety
- Interests of other pupils or members of the wider school community.

The main strategies to bring about reasonable adjustments in the next three years are described in the Accessibility Plan, however reasonable adjustments are made on a daily basis according to need, by working collaboratively with pupils, their parents/carers, visitors and all members of the school community. Our aim is that every child will have access to the full range of activities and experiences throughout their education and that all reasonable steps are taken to accommodate the needs of the wider school community.

The school will be successful in making reasonable adjustments when:
all pupils, wherever possible -

- participate fully in the school curriculum
- take full advantage of extra-curricular activities
- have the confidence to be fully involved at all times and in all parts of the building
- feel part of the life of the school
- are included by their peers in all parts of school life
- parents/carers of all pupils feel their child is part of the life of the school
- staff feel confident and supported in working with all pupils regardless of need

and when -

- Parents/carers, staff, governors and visitors are able to be fully involved in and make a full contribution to the life of the school.

3.5 School Facility Lettings Use by the community

Developments to improve accessibility of the school to disabled users are required. It is important that community users have full access to appropriate areas of school wherever possible and hirers/users are asked to discuss their requirements with school staff when booking premises.

3.6 Contractors and procurement

External agencies and contractors are made aware of individual needs as appropriate e.g. members of the catering staff are aware of individuals with food allergies.

3.7 Information, Performance and Evidence

All schools in the learning community collect data to help monitor the impact of its policies. Data collected will include information on

a. Pupil Achievement

Data will be collected in accordance with individual schools assessment policy. This data is collected to monitor whether the current provision helps all children to make expected, or better than expected progress.

b. Learning Opportunities

Close monitoring of the involvement in learning opportunities offered to the school community such as extra-curricular activities and "Learning Together". This monitoring enables us to identify and develop appropriate activities.

c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions

Admission is controlled by County. CYPS like all public bodies adheres to the DDA code of conduct. Children registered as disabled or with statements of SEN have preferential admission criteria.

Robust transition systems are in place to ensure the smooth transition of pupils, in particular there is excellent sharing of information across the learning community. Our designated secondary school employs transition workers who make regular visits to the feeder primaries and organise additional visits to the college as and when appropriate. The learning community SENCOs meet termly organise joint training and share information and good practice. All children spend induction days in the summer term at the college. Often if they have a TA assigned to them they will accompany them. Arrangements to support with specific needs are dealt with in conjunction with the pupil, their parents/carers and any external agencies that have been involved.

SENCO/transition workers attend the annual reviews of pupils with SEN statements in years 5 and 6 in order to assist with the preparation for transition.

Exclusion figures are carefully analysed to ensure that all available steps were taken to support individual children.

d. Social Relationships

Weekly assemblies, the buddy system, many aspects of the curriculum and in particular PSHE contribute to the ethos of tolerance and acceptance across the schools. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately and resolution of the situation is always sought.

e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

All schools within the learning community adhere to the regulation regarding recruitment (refer to Equal Opportunities policy). All staff have equal opportunities to training and this is monitored through the annual performance review process. This information is collated by a senior member of staff and stored in a secure place within the school.

3.8 Impact Assessment

In assessing the impact of the schools policy and practice regarding accessibility and to inform future planning each school will consider the following questions;

- What are the training needs of the school regarding “Accessibility For All”?
- Who will be involved in assessing impact?
- How will the school determine priorities?
- Does the school need external expertise? What external expertise is available to support the school?
- How will the assessments be shared? And with whom?

Assessment will be carried out through consultation with **all** members of the school community and where appropriate, advice may be sought from willing members with specific needs. Assessment will also involve the analysis of information from data collection, in order that areas for development can be identified.

This is a working document and therefore will be subject to review and alteration in response to the schools impact assessments and views expressed by its members; it will be used to drive forward the promotion of “Accessibility For All”. It will therefore be key to the review and development of all school policies and practices in order to achieve each schools vision of a welcoming and diverse community.

3.9 Reviewing/Monitoring

Monitoring of this document will be on-going (3.8) and will be formally evaluated at the end of the three year cycle. This document will be made available through the individual school websites and on request from individual schools.

Review Date: May 16

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: The Head Teacher

Governor Responsible: Sally Wilson