

Policy for Disability Equality and Access

Spring 2015



Disability Equality Policy

Millhouse Primary School

Introduction

Millhouse Primary School welcomes its general responsibilities under Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act (Disability Equality Duty) to have due regard to the need to:

- Prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how these duties will be met;
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people including pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to;

- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA);
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- Take steps to take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other people.

This Scheme and the accompanying Action Plans set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. We will constantly consult with, seek and value the contributions of disabled pupils, parents, staff and the wider community who already use the school or intend to do so in the future. This will ensure that this Scheme and accompanying Plans of Action are working documents, which may be amended and altered accordingly, as adjustments and improvements are made to our provision for disabled people.

School Ethos, Vision & Values

At Millhouse Primary School we aim to provide:

- A school where everyone feels valued and respected;
- A place with a warm, happy, calm, safe atmosphere where everyone enjoys learning and working together;
- An ethos which celebrates achievement and recognises success;
- A place which has consistent high expectations for all and where academic achievement is not the only measure of success;

- A school, which has learning and teaching at the heart of everything that it does;
- Our ethos values all children as individuals, raising self-esteem whenever we can and creating a positive atmosphere through our interactions with the children and each other.

At Millhouse Primary School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for pupils, staff and all those with disabilities, 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. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities. The achievement of pupils with disabilities will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We will not tolerate harassment of people with disabilities with any form of impairment. This school uses the 'social model' of disability, as the basis for its work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has 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'.

- A physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments; impairments relating to mental functioning, including learning disabilities; and long term health

conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

- Substantial means more than minor or trivial.
- Long-term means an impairment that has lasted at least 12 months, or is likely to last 12 months or for the rest of the person's life.
- Normal day-to-day activities cover the following categories: mobility; manual dexterity; physical coordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects; speech; hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; perception of the risk of physical danger.

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Someone with an impairment may be receiving medical or other treatment which alleviates or removes the effects of that impairment (but not the impairment itself). In such cases the treatment should be disregarded and the impairment is taken to have the effect it would have had without the treatment.

Some people are automatically deemed to have a disability covered by the Act - those with HIV, cancer, MS and severe disfigurements.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. However, it should be noted that disability is not the same as special educational needs; not all children who are defined as having a disability have special educational needs, and vice versa. For identification and clarification Millhouse Primary School has determined that those pupils on *School Action Plus* (or equivalent,) on the Special Educational Needs Register along with those with Statements of Special Educational Needs should be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and to ensure equality.

Aims and Objectives

- Our school aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils, or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children, and this of course includes pupils with disabilities.
- We constantly strive to remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.
- We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as non-disabled pupils to benefit from the education our school provides.
- We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his/her disability.
- We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage.
- We will do our best to anticipate the needs of a pupil or staff member with disabilities before s/he joins the school.
- We will constantly consult with, seek and value the contributions of disabled pupils, parents, staff and the wider community who already use the school or intend to do so in the future.

Removing Barriers

The school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils and members of staff and of the public are not disadvantaged.

The Physical Environment

We aim to continue to remove barriers to the physical environment for pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. Much has been done to improve access to the building and grounds in recent years, including the building of a ramp for wheelchair access, as well as improvements to the building as part of our extension work. However, we are aware that some adjustments may still be necessary to meet the needs of people with disabilities and through consultation and forward planning we will continue to seek to provide further improvements as far as possible.

We endeavour to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by developing the physical environment of the school, within the limits of the resources available. Where necessary, we will try to improve the following:

- Access to the school, by installing setting-down and picking-up points, ramps, handrails;
- Movement around the building, e.g. by adaptations, such as improved colour schemes, for people with impaired sight;
- Accommodation within the building, by providing toilets for disabled pupils, sound-proofing for pupils with impaired hearing, and medical rooms;
- Furniture, adapted for the needs of the disabled pupil in consultation with occupational therapy;
- Information and communication technology, by selecting appropriate hardware and software;
- Signage, by putting it in clear print.

We also seek to improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities.

The Curriculum

Disabilities can limit the extent to which children are able to participate in the curriculum, and can impede the delivery of information. The school will take great care to ensure that the needs of disabled pupils are clearly identified and that potential barriers to learning are removed.

The teaching staff, support staff, Head Teacher and SENCO will ensure that they are aware of potential barriers to learning for both individual and groups of pupils and as far as possible take the necessary measures required to eradicate these. On-going training will be provided to help staff develop their knowledge and expertise in ensuring good provision for disabled pupils, alongside continuous purposeful consultation with pupils and parents.

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language.

Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities.

The school regularly reviews the way in which resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training.

Many of the adjustments we make are dependent upon individual needs, and we are moving towards more individualised approaches. Individual Education Plans are effective and manageable.

The school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following: physiotherapists, educational psychologists, speech therapists, doctors, the school nurse, social workers, and the staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies. We benefit from the LA's advice, and its provision through the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired services.

We seek and respond to guidance from the parents/carers and the children.

Information

Information normally provided in writing (lesson content, texts, library resources and information about school events) will be made available in alternative formats that are clear and user-friendly, such as Braille, MP3, and large print, or it may be transmitted orally, or through lip-speaking or sign language, or through a recognised symbol system, or through ICT.

We always take account of disabilities, be they the pupils' or those of their parents or carers. For example, communication with a parent who is visually impaired may need to be by telephone rather than by letter.

Staffing

When advertising posts, or interviewing applicants, or deciding on appointments, the governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures, and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training, and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

We ask all staff with disabilities to identify any barriers that affect them and how we can plan to overcome them. At the moment there are no staff with disabilities at Millhouse, but should a member of staff become disabled, the governing body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements, or to the premises, in order to enable them to continue in post.

Health and Safety

Members of staff follow the school procedures both for the storage and for the administration of medicines to pupils.

We have procedures for when blood or other bodily substances have to be cleared away.

Clear care plans are made (in consultation with parents and the school nurse) and are strictly adhered to for pupils and staff with medical needs such as serious allergies.

The school has members of staff qualified in giving first-aid treatment, and the emergency services will be called, should they be required.

The school has stringent working policies in place for safeguarding and health and safety, and all staff are aware of their legal obligation to ensure a safe and healthy environment for both staff and pupils.

Policy into Practice

The governing body is responsible for the school's duty not to discriminate.

A named governor - ??????? and a designated member of staff - **Mr M Ritchie**, jointly discharge the responsibility of ensuring that we meet our obligation not to discriminate.

The Head Teacher will ensure that all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities to all pupils without exception.

All members of staff are fully committed to the policy of not discriminating against pupils, parents/carers or staff with disabilities.

Parents and carers are asked to keep us informed about any relevant issues, so that we can work towards resolving them.

Monitoring

We have high expectations of all our pupils. We monitor a range of data to make sure that all pupils are making the best progress possible, and that no groups of pupils are underachieving.

We monitor:

- admissions;
- attainment;
- exclusions;
- rewards and sanctions;
- the outcomes of parental and pupil questionnaires.

Evaluations based on these data are then reported to the governing body, and an action plan will be drawn up if necessary.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The governing body has a named Ms Marren with responsibility for matters of disability discrimination. It is this governor's responsibility to keep the governing body informed of any new regulations, and to ensure that the school regularly reviews its processes and procedures. The governor in question also liaises with the LA and other external agencies, to ensure that the school's procedures are in line with those of the LA.

The Head Teacher implements the school's disability non-discrimination policy on a day-to-day basis, and ensures that all staff are aware of the details of the policy as it applies to them.

The Head Teacher reports to governors annually on matters regarding disability discrimination.

This policy will be reviewed at any time on a request from the governors, or at least once every two years. However, due to the nature of the policy, the accompanying Plan of Action and the fact that the needs of disabled people within the school will not always remain static, it will be necessary to constantly monitor the School's provision for disabled pupils and adults and appropriate adjustments made as necessary to these documents.

Mr Matt Ritchie, Dec 2014