



Improving life for local people

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

**NEW MILLS SCHOOL
BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE COLLEGE**

3-year period covered by the scheme: 2007 – 2010

Introduction

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) require the governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties.

This scheme and the accompanying action plans set out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA require the governing body to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils in 3 ways:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

This scheme incorporates the school's plans to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

We would welcome any views/comments on this scheme

1: Accessibility Plan Vision

The Governors and staff of New Mills School are committed to their General Duty under the DDA and therefore seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- 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.

In pursuing the above we are mindful of the fact that the school's site is built on a hill with its buildings on 3 elevations. Whilst many of the school's buildings are recent in construction and incorporated disability access considerations, the main block dates from 1912 and poses serious accessibility challenges which the school is progressively seeking to overcome.

The school sets great store in being an inclusive comprehensive offering a high quality provision of education to all members of its community and is keen that its facilities are accessible to everyone, students and adults alike. To that end the school feels it is 'owned' by its community and actively seeks the views of its community in order to shape and develop future improvements. This scheme will be reviewed by the student body and parents will also be invited to comment on its development. A copy of the scheme will be posted on both the school's and the community's websites.

2: Involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents

Every year the school surveys its student, staff and parent community in early September to ascertain an up to date overview of the nature and level of any disability experienced by users of the premises and to seek their views for future developments and improvements.

We also actively seek the views of disabled groups in the community through the Access Group and the Volunteer Centre.

These views and insights provide invaluable insight into the barriers faced by disabled students, staff and parents and directly inform the priorities and issues identified later in this scheme.

The school is aware that seeking these views is a sensitive issue and keeps its consultation processes under review in order to improve the involvement of its disabled community in this key dialogue.

Our survey allows for anonymity if desired and stresses that the information gathered is confidential, held solely by the school and not revealed to anyone else and is used exclusively to help us improve issues of access.

3: Information gathering

New Mills School defines Disability in line with the current definitions in the Disability Discriminations Act (DDA). This means that in this school we define Disability as:

‘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.’

Definition of the terms:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments;
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;
- ‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’; and
- ‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

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 everyday objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement. There are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

In gathering our information about the levels of disability within our 'user' community we employ the categories above to help us identify potential barriers to access.

We have gathered information from a number of sources.

- We have surveyed all current pupils, parents, carers, staff, governors and users of the school to gain their views on current provision and future aspirations.
- We have contacted local disabled peoples groups and asked for their views.
- We have discussed the issues with all feeder schools/ nursery providers in the area.
- We have jointly discussed access with other local schools and produced details of other local provision.

The information is needed to allow the school to plan for the future so that the needs of the local disabled community as school users can be anticipated under the planning duty and met for all users. The information is used in such a way that individuals will be unidentifiable and therefore confidentiality is maintained.

In our school we look on the issue of someone not being able to access something because of a disability as being a problem with what is provided, not the person using the facility or accessing the provision. We would encourage people to make their needs known to us so that we can ensure that they do have full access.

We recognise that this is our first Disability Equality Scheme and that we need, as one of the priorities for the action plan to look at how we can keep this information up to date and how we involve members of the disabled community in the ongoing life of the plan. This will improve the quality of the information available when the plan is reviewed in three years time.

In our school the following adjustments are made to support school users who have a disability:

- a) All areas of the school now have disabled lift access
- b) The reception entrance has been made disabled 'friendly'
- c) Disabled ramp access has been provided at the rear of the main block

Our current disabled population is:

<i>Disability</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Mobility</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Manual dexterity</i>	<i>0.6</i>
<i>Physical co-ordination</i>	<i>0.7</i>
<i>Continence</i>	<i>0.5</i>
<i>Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects</i>	<i>0.5</i>
<i>Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand</i>	<i>2.3</i>
<i>Perception of risk of physical danger</i>	<i>1.05</i>
<i>Other: Dyslexia</i>	<i>0.1</i>
<i>Other: ADHD</i>	<i>0.3</i>

(N.B. Caveat: Figures above based on a 50% return from school population. The anonymity afforded by our information gathering processes also means that we do not have precise knowledge of those users of the site who consider themselves disabled which makes targeted intervention difficult)

The School Inclusion Manager, in conjunction with the SENCO, monitors the academic achievements of all on the SEN register and any known disabled students not on it and an annual review seeks to identify any relevant issues to inform the future development of this scheme.

The full curriculum is currently accessible to all students, though some may need help to do so.

The school is an Equal Opportunities employer and has a number of minor disabilities amongst its staff and governors.

We have also gathered information about recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.

We have reflected on the respective responsibilities of the school and the local authority and we have ensured that we are able to collect information on new staff through the recruitment process by adopting the questionnaire we use for our parent/student survey.

We have discussed the need to have information on disability with current staff and have collected this information by the same process.

This information will be collected through out the life of the Disability Equality Scheme and will inform the priorities for the next scheme.

The information collected shows how disabled staff are represented amongst different groups of employees, at different levels of the school, and amongst those who leave the school.

Academic Year 2007-8

Mobility

	% In post	% Leavers
Management	0	Tbc
AST	0	
UPS	1.5	
Main Scale	0	
Teaching Assistant	0	
Clerical	0	
Other	0	

Manual Dexterity

	% In post	% Leavers
Management	0	Tbc
AST	0	
UPS	0	
Main Scale	0	
Teaching Assistant	0	
Clerical	0	
Other	0	

Physical Co-ordination

	% In post	% Leavers
Management	0	Tbc
AST	0	
UPS	0	
Main Scale	0	
Teaching Assistant	0	
Clerical	0	
Other	0	

Contenance

	% In post	% Leavers
Management	0	Tbc
AST	0	
UPS	0	
Main Scale	0	
Teaching Assistant	0	
Clerical	0	
Other	0	

Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects

	<i>% In post</i>	<i>% Leavers</i>
<i>Management</i>	0	<i>Tbc</i>
<i>AST</i>	0	
<i>UPS</i>	0	
<i>Main Scale</i>	4.4	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	0	
<i>Clerical</i>	0	
<i>Other</i>	0	

Speech, hearing or eyesight

	<i>% In post</i>	<i>% Leavers</i>
<i>Management</i>	0	<i>Tbc</i>
<i>AST</i>	0	
<i>UPS</i>	0	
<i>Main Scale</i>	0	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	0	
<i>Clerical</i>	1.5	
<i>Other</i>	0	

Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand

	<i>% In post</i>	<i>% Leavers</i>
<i>Management</i>	0	<i>Tbc</i>
<i>AST</i>	0	
<i>UPS</i>	0	
<i>Main Scale</i>	1.5	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	0	
<i>Clerical</i>	0	
<i>Other</i>	0	

Perception of risk or physical danger

	<i>% In post</i>	<i>% Leavers</i>
<i>Management</i>	0	<i>Tbc</i>
<i>AST</i>	0	
<i>UPS</i>	0	
<i>Main Scale</i>	0	
<i>Teaching Assistant</i>	0	
<i>Clerical</i>	0	
<i>Other</i>	0	

New Mills School recognises the following benefits of a diverse workforce in our community.

- a) as inclusive role models for students
- b) as a true representation of the society in which we live and work
- c) to foster a better understanding and empathy for those with disabilities

4: Educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils.

Information about disabled pupils which is already available to the school comes from the LA through transfer documentation and our own transitional procedures.

Using the understanding of which pupils may count as disabled which we have established earlier in the scheme we have analysed this data against:

- the presence;
- participation; and
- achievements of disabled pupils.

Presence:

Our current disabled population is:

<i>Disability</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Mobility</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Manual dexterity</i>	<i>0.6</i>
<i>Physical co-ordination</i>	<i>0.7</i>
<i>Continence</i>	<i>0.5</i>
<i>Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects</i>	<i>0.5</i>
<i>Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand</i>	<i>2.3</i>
<i>Perception of risk of physical danger</i>	<i>1.05</i>
<i>Other: dyslexia</i>	<i>0.1</i>
<i>Other: ADHD</i>	<i>0.3</i>
<i>School identified SEN</i>	<i>12.4</i>

The table above shows our analysis of the Disabled population in our school. It shows:

- what % disabled pupils there are in the school (including SEN);
- which impairment groups are represented in the school; and
- whether there are groups of disabled pupils who are not represented at the school.

This tells us that we have a very small population who consider themselves disabled but it must be born in mind that the figures as they currently stand are extrapolated from a 50% return plus information available in school from our SEN register.

Participation:

There are some areas of the school site which currently prove difficult, if not impossible, for **fully independent** physical access, though all may be accessed with assistance. These areas have been identified as

- The gym
- Off site PE facilities – the Leisure Centre and our playing fields
- All classrooms in the old main block given their physical structure

Other areas are awkward, given the incline of the school's site, and require lengthier approach routes through gradual gradients.

The administration of medicines is treated sensitively and privacy is afforded through arrangements on the Reception desk.

Our TA/SEN team offer different forms of communication to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others through differentiated worksheets and, if necessary, through alternative language formats.

From the analysis of the information we have collected about the participation of disabled pupils we have decided on the following priorities for the Disability Equality Scheme:

Priority 1: Visibility around the site

Priority 2: Signage

Priority 3: Mobility

Priority 4: SENCO to target/monitor performance of students on SEN register and report to Governors.

From this analysis we have also decided that the following issues can be addressed by making reasonable adjustments.

Issue 1: **Visibility**

Reasonable Adjustment: Hazard strips fitted throughout; vision strips on internal doors;

Issue 2 **Signage**

Reasonable Adjustment: Toilet sign for girls/boys in main block;

Issue 3 **Mobility**

Reasonable Adjustment: Hand rails in strategic places; railings outside Art block opposite CDT; prominent floor grids levelled; floor entrance to CDT levelled.

The achievements of disabled pupils

We have analysed the achievements of our known disabled pupils against the same success criteria we use for all our pupils including:

- exams;
- accredited learning;
- end of key stage outcomes;
- comparative progress measured by the optional SATs;
- achievements in extra-curricular activities; and
- broader outcomes such as those set out in *Every Child Matters*.

From this analysis we have seen that students with known disability on the SEN register are generally on or just below the school average in terms of their level of attainment.

Our priority to address this is to have the SENCO target and monitor these known students using the school's new student tracking system and provide governors with regular monitoring reports for considered action/intervention.

5: Information on disabled parents, carers and others using the school.

Our annual survey of parental needs seeks to establish whether they, as occasional visitors to the school's site, need special considerations such as parking facilities, assistance in movement about the site and access to specialised facilities.

6: Impact assessment

The main mechanism by which our school will assess the impact of our current policies will be by bringing together:

- the issues identified through the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents; and
- the information that the school holds on the disabled pupils, staff and parents.

Over the lifetime of the scheme we will assess the impact on disabled people of our current policies. We will involve disabled people in prioritising what is to be looked at first. Impact assessment will be incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of existing policies and into the process of developing new policies.

7: Identifying the main priorities for our school's scheme and deciding our actions.

The priorities for the school's scheme have been set in the light of:

- an examination of the information that the school has gathered;
- the messages that the school has heard from the disabled pupils, staff and parents who have been involved in the development of the scheme.

Priorities identified are about:

- improving information;
- Improving the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents.

The actions we will take to promote equality of opportunity will address the six elements of the general duty:

Promoting equality of opportunity

We are working proactively to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils at policy and whole school level, as well as for individual pupils. Through this we promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils and aim to secure their participation in every aspect of school life.

We have incorporated priorities from our accessibility plan into the scheme.

These are:

Priority 1: Visibility around the site

Priority 2: Signage

Priority 3: Mobility

Priority 4: SENCO to target/monitor performance of students on SEN register and report to Governors.

We have also added further priorities in respect of promoting equality of opportunity for:

disabled staff by consideration of rooming arrangements.

disabled parents, carers and others who use the school by providing temporary parking access nearer the venue for parents' evenings.

Eliminating discrimination

We are working proactively to eliminate discrimination, for example:

- By awareness raising and staff training;
- By keeping a watchful eye on the impact of policies;
- Reviewing and adjusting policies;
- Raising expectations;
- Improving communication

Eliminating harassment

We are working proactively to eliminate harassment. We will:

- raise awareness amongst staff and pupils of disability-related harassment;
- understand the nature and prevalence of bullying and harassment;
- recognise and address bullying and harassment;
- involve pupils themselves in combating bullying;
- ensure that disability-related harassment of disabled staff, parents, carers and other users of the school is identified and addressed.

Promoting positive attitudes

We are working proactively to promote positive attitudes to disability, for example:

- by staff modelling respectful attitudes to disabled pupils, staff and parents;
- by ensuring representation of disabled people in senior positions in the school;
- through positive images in school books and other materials.

Encouraging participation in public life

Disabled pupils, staff and parents are encouraged to participate in school life:

they see their disabled peers included and succeeding in the life of the school;

disabled pupils, staff and parents will be represented in senior, responsible and representative roles wherever possible;

there are positive images around the school of disabled people's participation.

Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

We will ensure that the policies of the school and the climate of the school are designed to meet disabled pupils needs. We will give due consideration to the fact that in order to do this we may have to ensure that the disabled person receives more favourable treatment.

8: Making it happen: Implementation

In order to ensure that the scheme is effectively implemented we will ensure that:

- the scheme is supported by a detailed action plan; and
- the action plan is incorporated into a framework that has the oversight of the governing body, and that progress is checked.

The action plan will show:

- clear allocation of lead responsibility;
- clear allocation of resources;
- an indication of expected outcomes or performance criteria;
- clear timescales;
- a specified date and process for review.

The scheme will be linked to both the full School Improvement Plan and the Accessibility Plan to ensure that the scheme is reviewed on a regular basis by the governing body.

9: Evaluation

We will evaluate the effectiveness of this scheme and reflect this evaluation in our discussions with:

- our school improvement partner; and
- Ofsted, when the school is inspected.

10: Publication

The school's Disability Equality Scheme is published on the school website and is available as a hard copy on request from the school.

This scheme was published on December 21st 2007 and will be in operation until December 2010.

11: Reporting

We will report annually on:

- the progress we have made on our action plan; and
- the effect of what we have done.

The report on the scheme will be:

- available on the website
- released in a newsletter
- made available upon request to the school

12: Reviewing and revising the scheme

As part of the review of the scheme, we will:

- revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the scheme; and
- re-examine the information to see if actions that the school has taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for disabled pupils, staff and parents.

The review of the scheme will inform its revision: how the school sets new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will again:

- involve disabled pupils, staff and parents; and
- be based on the annual information that the school has gathered.

Over time we will align our accessibility plan and our disability equality scheme so that we produce a new scheme and plan at the same time.

This **ACTION PLAN** picks up the Priorities Highlighted in Sections 1 and 2 of the DES and the Accessibility plan.

DES SECT	TARGET	ACTION	LEAD RESP.	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/MILESTONES	QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES
Priority 1	Visibility issues	Hazard strips to be fitted to all potential 'visually impaired' locations	JC/JE	Strips fitted by April 08	DES group sign off work
Priority 2	Signage issues	All toilets signed up	JC/JE	Signs in place by April 08	DES group sign off work
Priority 3	Mobility issues	Hand rails throughout Railings in place Level entrances	JC/JE	Work completed by April 08	DES group sign off work
Priority 4	SENCO tracking	Update register of SEN in line with DES identification of disability	LOM/SIM	Register complete by April 08; target students identified.	DES group sign off work

Forward Planning

The school recognises the bigger issues facing it if it is to be truly inclusive:

- **Improvements to the main block in terms of mobility access**
- **Door width for disabled access**
- **Hearing loop system in main block**
- **Access to gym through front door rather than rear access**
- **Access to off-site PE facilities**

These issues need to be taken up with the LA since the budgetary implications exceed the school's current ability to meet the extent of the changes necessary.