

Disability Equality Scheme

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Mission Statement

At St.Cuthbert's Catholic High School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled students, 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 students 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 St.Cuthbert's Catholic High 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

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- Is information collected on disability with regards to both students and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
 - Is pupil achievement monitored by disability? Are there are trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
 - Are disabled students 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 students 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 students, staff and visitors to the school? Are open evenings and other events which parents or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
 - Is information available to parents, visitors, students and staff in formats which 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?

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is “clinically well-recognised”, although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse affect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on schools, which 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 students, staff and those using services provided by schools.

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

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 students 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, school will 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.

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

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 students, staff and those using school services should be involved in the production of the Disability Equality Scheme.

St.Cuthbert's Catholic High School has consulted with disabled students, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme by:

Consultation with disabled students / staff / parents to determine their priorities for the school with regards to disability equality over the next three years via:

- Questionnaires

- Canvassed views of stakeholders during parents and open evenings

Making things happen

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Disability Equality Duty St.Cuthbert's Catholic High 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

The following examples provide good practice and suggest on how disability equality can be promoted in a school environment.

- 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 students 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 students. Encourage students 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 students.
- 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.

Our DEG members are:

C.Davison Head
H.Smith

Making things happen

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- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people (continued)
 - Celebrate and highlight key events such as the Paralympics
 - Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
 - Ensure that disabled students are represented and encouraged to participate in class assemblies, plays, events and on the school council
 - Books and other resources that promote a positive attitude towards disabled people have been purchased by the library
 - Fire evacuation procedure has been impact assessed and amended to include provision for people with addition mobility needs
 - There will be 5 enrichment activities when the timetable is suspended. The impact of these days will be evaluated by every pupil. One of these will be a 'Diversity Day'
 - Procedures for recruitment have been amended to comply with the Age Regulations 2006
 - We have an Equal opportunities policy that is adhered to
 - we have an area for mentoring and a safe haven during lunchtimes for students at risk
 - use weekly bulletin to raise awareness of policy on harassment and bullying

The plan

The following action plan outlines what will be achieved in the next year with regards to meeting the Disability Equality Duty.

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Completion date
20010							
Increasing equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people	Parents and learners may not be aware that the school does have some disabled access learning areas	Include what disabled access to the building is available in literature and newsletters	Evidence in the literature	Termly	HS		
	Stakeholders with visual impairment may not be able to read small print	All school documents must be in Ariel 11 or larger.	Dipstick checks of school documents and websites check	Termly	SENCo HS		
	Students with a disability are included in as many events as possible	Ensure education visits, G&T rewards are inclusive	Monitoring opportunities provided to SEN and G&T students and increase take-up	Termly	Senco		

Monitoring and reporting

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 monitoring of the actions outlined in the action plan will be monitored in accordance with the specified timescales. If any adverse impacts are identified during the monitoring process, the action plan will need to be revised.

An annual report will be produced which outlines the progress of the Disability Equality Scheme and assesses the implementation of the action plan for effectiveness. This report will be circulated to the Head-teacher and Governors, and the findings will be used to improve the Disability Equality Scheme and feed into future practice.

Date Agreed: _____
Date Reviewed: _____