

Template for a school Disability Equality Scheme

School name:.....

Three year period covered by the plan:.....

Introduction:

Duties under Part 5A of the 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.

The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

- Consider those already set out in the accessibility plan. This could be adapted e.g. by broadening references to disabled pupils to include the wider range of people to whom the disability equality duty i.e. disabled staff, parents, carers and others who use the school or may want to do so.
- Refer to the general duty and ensure its six elements are reflected.

For this section refer to:

- *Pg 9- 14 Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales" DRC*
- DRC's website www.dotheduty.org

1. How we have involved disabled people in developing this scheme.

- Explain how you know who your disabled pupils, employees, governors, parents and carers are. If you don't know, look at Section 2 - 'Gathering information' and build this into your action plan.
- Describe which of these you have involved in this scheme:
 - disabled pupils at your school (this could include past and prospective pupils)?
 - disabled employees (this could include ex-employees or LA employees)?
 - disabled governors (maybe from other schools)?
 - disabled and non-disabled parents (maybe members of parent/teacher associations)?
 - disabled members of the wider community (e.g. local disability groups, disabled individuals accessing extended services, disabled grandparents or other family members)?
- Explain in what way disabled people have been involved e.g.
 - In identifying priorities e.g. for the accessibility plan.
 - In identifying barriers.
 - In reviewing the Action plan of previous DES schemes
 - By participating in a working group e.g. disability equality steering group, disabled pupils' council group
 - By seeking views through exit interviews of disabled pupils/staff leaving the school.

If it is difficult for your school to involve disabled people, what are you going to put in your action plan to show how are you going to improve this?

- Explain the methods you have used to access views and ascertain 'wants' e.g.
 - Organised formal meetings e.g. of the PTA, of the local disability group.
 - Organised informal social events?
 - One-off or regular focus groups?
 - On-line forums publicised in newsletters?
 - Planned PSHE lessons?
 - Contacting teaching union networks of disabled members?
 - Ensured alternative communication methods are available for those who need them to give their views.
- Explain how you have you tried to ensure that people with a diverse range of disabilities are represented and/or that someone with a wider perspective than their own impairment is involved.
- Explain how, if necessary you have ensured that those who need alternative communication methods (e.g. symbols, signing) have been able to take part.

- If you are a small school, explain how you are working in a cluster group with other schools to involve disabled people.

To support this section see:

- Pg 19-22, "Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales" DRC
- "Involving disabled people" DRC booklet + website guidance www.drc.org.uk/employers_and_service_provider/disability_equality_duty/getting_started/involving_disabled_people.aspx (check!!)
- Pg 11, pg 19-22 "Promoting Disability Equality in Schools" DfES, Teachernet

2. How we intend to gather information on the effect of our policies and practices on disabled people.

You should have a sound information base and be confident that you have identified all the disabled people involved with your school. To achieve this you should have raised awareness of the definition of disability with pupils, staff, parents/carers and other school users (see appendix 1). The following section will help you to achieve this but for many schools, improving their information base will be a targeted priority area in their first DES action plan. Wherever possible use existing information gathering mechanisms.

a) Recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees

- Describe how you know who your disabled staff are.
- Explain how, when recruiting and selecting new staff, you collect information on disability.
- Explain how you gather information on any disabilities of existing staff e.g.
 - by sending a confidential staff questionnaire to home addresses?
 - by giving staff opportunities to raise personal issues during the school year?
- Explain how, even though there is no legal obligation to disclose a disability, the school has enabled all staff to feel comfortable about doing so e.g. by
 - promoting awareness of the DDA and the legal protection that it offers;
 - explaining why the information is needed?
 - explaining that disclosure can enable the school to make appropriate reasonable adjustments;
 - reassuring staff of the confidentiality of their disclosure;
 - raising awareness of the LA policy on harassment and bullying;
 - promoting awareness of the support available to disabled members of staff
 - looking at how the school encourages disabled applicants for posts?
- Explain how the school has collected data on disabled employees to see how they are represented amongst different groups of employees The groups you might consider include:
 - admin. support
 - teachers
 - teaching assistants
 - senior posts
 - staff with TLR points
 - full or part-time staff
 - permanent or temporary staff
 - contract staff
 - those taking sick leave
 - those leaving the profession early
 - those taking up harassment / bullying procedures

NB. You may have to liaise with the LA to get this information.

- Demonstrate that the school is aware of the 'Access to work' scheme and of LA policies (e.g. phased return to work) which may be relevant for disabled staff.

To support this section see:

- Pg 22-27, pg 40 *"Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales"* DRC
- *"Evidence gathering"* DRC booklet
- Pg 12, pg 22-27, pg 43 *"Promoting Disability Equality in Schools"* DfES, Teachernet

b) Educational opportunities available to and achievements of disabled pupils

- Explain how many disabled pupils there are in the school and which impairment groups are/ are not represented.
- Describe how you collect information on the disability of new pupils as part of school admission enquiries / other communication. This may consist of simply asking parents "Does your child have any learning difficulty, medical condition or disability?".
- Describe how the school ensures pupils feel comfortable in raising issues or difficulties they have as a result of a health condition/impairment.
- Explain progress data the school holds on disabled pupils e.g. any or all of the following:
 - Exam results.
 - Accredited learning.
 - End of Key stage outcomes.
 - Optional SATs.
 - Extra-curricular achievements.
 - Every Child Matters outcomes.
- In addition you should explain how the school monitors information for disabled pupils on any of the following:
 - positions of responsibility held.
 - satisfaction /enjoyment levels in different school activities.
 - levels of behaviour and anxiety
 - areas of the curriculum which present particular challenges for them or to which they have restricted access.
 - areas of the school where they have no or impeded access.
 - aspirations/ambitions for the future.

- success of transition out of school.
 - access to school trips.
 - involvement in school and after-school clubs, etc.
 - access to work experience placements.
 - take up of careers advice.
- explain how the school seeks feedback

For this section see:

- *Pg 22-27, pg 40 "Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales" DRC*
- *"Evidence gathering" DRC booklet*
- *Pg 12, pg 22-27, pg 43 "Promoting Disability Equality in Schools" DfES, Teachernet*
- *Appendix A of this template*

Also refer to:

- *Annual School Census (ASC) returns*
- *SEN list*
- *Medical register*

c) Information on other disabled people using our services

NB. You do not have to collect information on disabled parents/carers and other users but it is difficult to do the duty without this information.

- Explain how, when pupils are admitted you ask about any disability or health conditions that their parents/carers might have.
- Explain how you have collected information on the disability / health conditions of parents/carers of pupils already at the school e.g. as part of satisfaction surveys or via communications about parent evenings.
- Describe the efforts the school has taken
 - to define disability for parents/carers,
 - to explain why the information is being requested and
 - to reassure parents/carers about confidentiality of disclosure.

For this section see:

- *Pg 22-27, pg 40 "Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales" DRC*
- *"Evidence gathering" DRC booklet + website guidance at:*
www.drc.org.uk/employers_and_service_provider/disability_equality_duty/getting_started/evidence_gathering.aspx
- *Pg 12, pg 22-27, pg 43 "Promoting Disability Equality in Schools" DfES, Teachernet*

3. How we will use the information gathered

In this section you should explain how the school will use the information it has gathered to:

- develop an initial action plan
- review an existing plan
- inform subsequent schemes

4. How the impact of our school policies and practices will be assessed

In this section you should explain how the impact (or likely impact) of your policies and practices on disabled children and adults will be assessed and analysed. Existing mechanisms and practices should be used to ensure efficient use of resources.

- Explain the system you have for reviewing/screening existing policies and practices to ensure that they promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and do not inadvertently disadvantage them. This may involve mapping them and developing a timetable. Policies and practices likely to have the biggest impact should be reviewed first e.g. PE, Sex Education,?
- Explain how this scrutiny will be used for future policies and practices.
- Explain how disabled people have been involved in helping to identify and prioritise those policies and practices having an adverse effect for them.
- Explain how disabled pupils and adults are involved in impact assessments.
- Explain how you have ensured short term and long term impacts are assessed.
- Explain how information will be used to review the Action plan.
- Explain what the information you have collected tells you about the following:
 - **Recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees** e.g. how disabled employees are represented amongst different groups of employees, whether appropriate adjustments and support are being put in place for disabled employees to enable them to return to work or continue in service.
 - **Educational opportunities available to and achievements of disabled pupils** e.g. the impact of your school's policies and practices on the opportunities and achievements of disabled pupils, how well your disabled pupils are achieving, any formerly unrecognised barriers.
 - **Information on other disabled people using our services** e.g. any formerly unrecognised access needs
- Explain progress the school has made in relation to disability equality, including any trends over time if you are able to identify these.

For this section see:

- *Pg 28-29, pg 32 Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales” DRC*
- *DRC website guidance at:*
www.drc.org.uk/employers_and_service_provider/disability_equality_duty/getting_started/impact_assessments.aspx
- *“Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings”.* (This can be ordered free of charge online at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications Ref:- DfES 0160 2006 or by calling 0845 600 9506.)

5. Action plan

This section should explain the action your school will be taking in the next 3 years to meet the general duty and make practical improvements for disabled pupils and adults connected with your school. Many of the actions will have already been identified in your accessibility plan e.g. measures to combat disability-related bullying or to increase representation of disabled pupils in positions of responsibility. However, priorities relating to disabled staff, parents, carers and others who use the school may not have been considered e.g. to improve their involvement.

Examples of key areas you are likely to have as action points for your first Action Plan:

- Improving information gathering mechanisms.
- Mapping policies and practices
- Facilitating the involvement of disabled pupils and adults
- Increasing access to:
 - The curriculum
 - The environment
 - information

Further action points might include:

- Developing mechanisms to measure progress in promoting equality of opportunity.
- Setting specific goals for improved educational attainment of disabled pupils.
- Improving the employment and/or retention of disabled staff e.g. carrying out impact assessment of the sickness policy, introducing mentor scheme for disabled employees (dependent on a school's responsibility for this and its size)
- Making reasonable adjustments for disabled parents/carers e.g. communicating with them via the phone, providing a signer, putting letters home into Braille / large font, providing wheelchair access.
- Improving the participation of disabled pupils in school life e.g. by increasing the number holding positions of responsibility and /or represented on the school council
- Promoting positive attitudes e.g. through a disability poster campaign
- Ensuring (as far as the school is able) that disability equality / disability requirements are built into any contract conditions/specifications with private, charitable or voluntary sector organisations for procured work and services e.g. school meals, holiday clubs, sport activities, site maintenance etc. Most schools will need to work with their LA to ensure this.

For this section see:

- *Pg. 30- 31, 33-34 Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales” DRC*
- *DRC's website www.dotheduty.org*
- *“Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings” (DfES 0160 2006)*

5. Action plan: 20__ to 20__

Priority (i.e. what you are hoping to achieve)	Action Required (including necessary resources)	Success Criteria	Timescale (i.e. when the outcome will be achieved)	Responsible Person (s)

Review Date: _____

Senior Member of Staff Responsible: _____

The scheme and action plan needs to be committed to by the highest level of authority you have- the Head Teacher & Chair of Governors (or equivalent). You may also want a member of staff with disability expertise to take responsibility for the day-to-day implementation. All actions detailed must be taken unless it is unreasonable or impractical for you to do so, in which case these reasons must be identified.

Designated Member of Staff: _____ **Governor Responsible:** _____

Appendix 1

Definition of disability

For guidance see:

- Pg 40-41 *Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales” DRC*
- DWP (2006) 'Disability Discrimination Act: Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability', London: TSO.
- DfES (2001) 'Special Educational Needs: Code of Practice' at www.publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DfES+0581+2001

