

# Disability Equality Scheme and Access Action Plan

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## **1. Introduction and aims:**

At The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust we believe in providing every opportunity to develop pupils', young people and adults full potential. All our pupils, staff and visitors should feel valued, cared for, listened to and encouraged to challenge themselves to be the best they can. It is our aim to reduce and eliminate barriers to the curriculum, fuller aspects of school life and the school environment for pupils and prospective pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a disability.

In this scheme we will outline how we can promote disability equality for all disabled pupils, staff, parents', Directors and visitors to our schools. We also have a duty to publish our Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan which explains how we are doing this now, and what we plan to do over the next three years.

### Dyslexia Friendly

As a Trust that fully supports 'Dyslexia Friendly' practice, all behaviours, teaching and learning will be supported with reasonable adjustment to meet the individuals' needs. All schools within the Trust have been awarded 'Full Dyslexia Friendly Status' through a county council inspection process.

## **2. Background:**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust to ensure our practices and policies comply with these acts and increase access to education for disabled pupils. It is our duty to make sure that:

- ✓ We do not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;

- ✓ We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- ✓ We will plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.
- ✓ We do not discriminate against anyone as explained in the DDA, 1995
- ✓ We do not allow any form of harassment of people with a disability
- ✓ We will promote positive attitudes towards anyone living with a disability
- ✓ We will remove barriers which may discourage disabled people from playing a full part in the life of our Trust
- ✓ We will encourage full participation by everyone in our activities

Our accessibility action plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised annually.

Attached is a set of action points showing how the Trust will address the priorities identified in the plan.

### **3. Definitions of disability:**

A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that is:

- ✓ Substantial
- ✓ Long-term and
- ✓ Has an adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal every day activities

A fuller set of definitions can be found in Appendix A

### **4. Principles:**

- ✓ Compliance with the above-mentioned legislation is consistent with the Trust's aims, Equal Opportunities Policy and the operation of the Trust's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

- ✓ As an admissions authority our Admissions Policy applies which does not discriminate a disabled child
- ✓ We recognise that it is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled pupil by excluding him or her from the Trust for a reason related to the pupil's impairment
- ✓ When recruiting staff disabled people will not be discriminated against
- ✓ We recognise and value parents' and carers' knowledge of their child's disability and seek partnership and consultation.
- ✓ We provide all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Our curriculum endorses the key principles in the National Curriculum 2000, underpinning the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
  - setting suitable learning challenges
  - responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
  - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils
  - by ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedures for identifying and monitoring teaching and supporting pupils young people and adults with disabilities

## **5. Purpose and direction of the Trust's plan:**

The Trust's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) aim to demonstrate how we intend to meet our duty to promote disability equality for disabled pupils, staff, parents and visitors.

## **6. Information from pupil data and school audit:**

Information about the needs of disabled people will be gathered through:

- ✓ Pupil admission information
- ✓ Parental questionnaire

- ✓ RM Integris data
  - ✓ SEN reviews/EHC Plans
  - ✓ Recruitment process
  - ✓ Discussion with relevant medical professionals and other outside support agencies
- Achievements of disabled people will be gathered through:
- Data analysis (progress made and value added scores)
  - Records of achievement
  - Celebration assemblies, certificates, letters home, etc.

Information is gathered as part of the Trust's self-evaluation process and Assessment for Learning Strategies and is used to inform future plans and schemes.

#### **7. Views of those consulted during the development of the plan:**

To ensure that all of our schools are a welcoming environment for everybody, we believe it is important to consult all stakeholders. Where adjustments need to be made, we have consulted those who have an understanding of different disabilities and the barriers they present. Those consulted in the development of our DES and AAP include:

- ✓ Pupils with and without a disability
- ✓ Parents of pupils who have a disability
- ✓ Staff
- ✓ Directors
- ✓ Members of our community with relevant experience
- ✓ Local Special Schools and Outreach Teams

Our consultation included questions about barriers to learning and full involvement in school life. We discussed:

- ✓ Movement around the building and grounds easily and confidently
- ✓ Having equal opportunity to access lessons and other activities

- ✓ How we could improve communication between home and school
- ✓ How we could raise awareness of the scheme and the issues addressed so that all members of the Trust community could be more proactive in including disabled people in every aspect of school life

#### **8. The main priorities in the Trust's plan:**

- ✓ Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils, young people and adults can participate in the Trust curriculum
- ✓ Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils, young people and adults can take advantage of education and wider life of school including trips and clubs
- ✓ Improve the accessibility of written information to disabled pupils, young people and adults

#### **9. Making it happen:**

##### **Audit, management, implementation and monitoring**

- ✓ Children are taught using a variety of teaching and learning methods, ensuring accessibility to the curriculum for all
- ✓ Children have individual learning targets, closely monitored and regularly reviewed
- ✓ All staff are trained in Assessment for Learning and this continues to be developed and updated
- ✓ Analysis of building blocks and in house Sen assessments, allows us to measure the impact of intervention and support strategies for children on the Disability Register (DR)
- ✓ Teaching Assistants are well trained and work in collaboration with the teaching staff to ensure appropriate support is offered to children with disabilities
- ✓ SEN register is kept up to date

- ✓ Appropriate and specific intervention programmes for pupils with SEN
- ✓ SEN 'Plan, Do, Review' cycles are in place
- ✓ Advice is sought from SEN Support Service (SENSIS) Advisory Teacher, Educational Psychologist and other appropriate outside agencies to provide staff with information about making 'reasonable adjustments'

### **Making reasonable adjustments**

We aim to remove any barriers that we find are making life more difficult for people with disabilities. These barriers may be lessened by making 'reasonable adjustments' to

a) the building and grounds:

- ✓ Structured and supportive playtime and lunchtime activities such playground buddies
- ✓ Ensuring all adjustments to current buildings are DDA compliant
- ✓ Denote hazards for the visually impaired
- ✓ Flexibility of seating arrangements to suit need

b) learning and teaching:

- ✓ We will review and monitor to ensure disabled pupils make progress in line with their abilities, we will then evaluate and adapt our practice accordingly
- ✓ Academic progress is monitored and 'value added' considered
- ✓ Additional support (small group or 1:1) will be provided where possible
- ✓ Individual targets and 'Plan, Do, Review' cycles ensure aptness of teaching and learning strategies
- ✓ Targets will be monitored regularly
- ✓ Targets and progress towards them will be reported to parents regularly
- ✓ Using RAISE ONLINE, Building Blocks, Assessment Manager and monitoring in school by senior staff, we are able to track and analyse the achievement of all our pupils

- ✓ Review of policies in the Trust is ongoing, including updates to the Anti-bullying and PSHE & Citizenship policies

c) communication methods

- ✓ Use of interactive whiteboards
- ✓ Use of ICT resources by pupils
- ✓ Visual timetables for some pupils
- ✓ Newsletters to parents
- ✓ Diary and news pages on the school website
- ✓ Informal discussions with parents
- ✓ Telephone messages and conversations with parents
- ✓ Text messaging
- ✓ Most information is available electronically and can be converted to other appropriate formats
- ✓ Director Surgeries

The effectiveness of these adjustments will be monitored regularly and the opinions of our 'working party' and disabled stakeholders canvassed. Feedback will come from:

- ✓ Pupil interviews
- ✓ School Council
- ✓ Parental questionnaires
- ✓ Staff opinions (teaching and non-teaching)
- ✓ Directors
- ✓ Other visitors and users of the school
- ✓ Outside Agencies

### **Monitoring and Impact Assessments**



The Directors will review the Action Plan annually during the Spring Term. We will measure the impact of any changes or initiatives on the quality of school life in its widest sense for those pupils on our disability register.

This will be done through the following initiatives designed to increase awareness of, and positive attitudes towards, disability:

- ✓ Pupils interviews
- ✓ Increasing staff awareness
- ✓ Parental questionnaires
- ✓ Analysis of assessment data

The action plan will be evaluated and updated annually.

The disability registers will be updated as and when necessary.

The school census will be updated annually.

Formal review of the scheme will take place after three years (March 2021)

- ✓ The impact of all Trust policies and practices on disability equality will be assessed at the time of review with the Directors and a review group which will include pupils with a disability.
- ✓ The Trust will report on the scheme annually
- ✓ The scheme will be reviewed and revised as necessary (and on a three-year cycle)

#### **Getting hold of the Trust's plan**

- ✓ The scheme will be available on the Trust's website and hard copies produced on request at the school office.

## ACTION PLAN FOR DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

**2022 - 2023**

Collecting views to inform scheme	Activity/resources	Responsible	Timescale	Outcome
	Collect views of pupils on disability register through pupil interviews	Headteachers	Annually	
	Send out/collect in questionnaires to parents	Headteachers	Annually in September	
	Revise new admissions pack to include questions for parents of children with disability	Headteachers	Annually	
	Collect views of disabled users of school with specific focus on reading letters and information sent home. Direct contact with known parents.	All staff	Annually	
	Keep staff updated in terms of information sharing, training and collection of their views;	Headteachers	Ongoing.	
	Discussion with parents and pupils at Parent's Evenings, 'Plan, Do, Review' cycle reviews (Personal Support Plans), etc.	All Teaching Staff	Ongoing	
	Consideration of collected stakeholders' views	SLT	Annually	

Premises and Environment	Carry out premises audit with attention to: lighting, signage, fire alarms, acoustic environment, floor coverings, heating and ventilation, accessible and clean toileting, washing and changing facilities; accessibility of outside areas – playground, field, walkways into school	Headteachers & CEO	On going	Achieved
	Consider as part of the audit the provision of ramps, lifts and improvements to doorways; the provision of furniture and apparatus to improve access.	Headteachers & CEO	On-going according to development	
	Plan for and act on the recommendations from the audit, as far as possible and reasonable within the Trust's budget. (Further actions to be developed following audit).	Headteachers & CEO	Ongoing	

Policies and Initiatives	Activity	Responsible	Timescale	Outcome
	Behaviour Policy Review	CEO, All staff, School Council, Directors	Annual	
	Include information and key documents on school website	SLT	Ongoing	
	Consider and improve the accessibility of text based information provided to the Trust community – books, letters home, newsletters, website, etc; look at ways of reducing communication barriers for those with visual impairment or dyslexia	CEO, All Staff	On going	
	Include aspects of Disability Equality in school assemblies	All Staff	On going	
	Increase awareness of and positive attitudes towards disability through the curriculum	All teachers	Ongoing,	
	Conduct audit of the physical environment of the school and make recommendations for any necessary actions	Headteachers & CEO	Termly	

	Review the accessibility of written information to those with a disability and implement any necessary actions for improvement	Headteacher, SENCO	Termly	
	Review of other linked policies: SEN, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Ant-bullying, PSHE and Citizenship, Curriculum, Learning and Teaching, Transfer of Medical information; Write impact statements	SLT and Directors	Annually	
	Ensure staff are fully briefed and up to date with DES and that it is added to induction training of new staff	SLT	Ongoing as and when necessary	

Using Data to develop	Activity	Responsible	Timescale	Outcome
	Disability Register. (Pupils and staff)	SENCO	Annually	
	Add Disability Register to Integris	SENCO	Annually	

	Establish method of collecting data on Integris to analyse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attendance</li> <li>✓ Exclusions</li> <li>✓ Academic Performance</li> </ul>	SLT	Termly	
	Half-termly Progress Meetings, where needs, issues and performance of pupils on DR are discussed	SLT All Staff	Ongoing,	
	Create class file with basic medical information for visiting/supply teachers (in Registers). Passed on and discussed with new teacher at the beginning of a new school year.	SLT	On going	

Access to the Curriculum	Activity	Responsible	Timescale	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Remind staff of Quality First Teaching and National Curriculum Inclusion Statement.</li> <li>✓ Run staff meeting on “Reasonable Adjustments”</li> </ul>	Headteachers	Ongoing	
	Share good practice relating to disability issues and data	All staff	Ongoing	
	Monitoring of teachers’ planning will include careful consideration of differentiation and ‘reasonable adjustments’ made	Headteachers	Ongoing	

	Review of resources and ICT provision with consideration to suitability and development of pupils on DR	SLT	Ongoing	
	Audit of staff training needs	All Staff	Ongoing	

**Assessment:**

- ✓ The completion of essential set up tasks
- ✓ The impact of better awareness of everyone in school producing more positive opinions ✓  
Improved academic results and standards

**Monitoring and evaluation:**

- ✓ To be completed annually by Disability Working Party, during the Summer Term ✓  
Consider views of those on disability register and their parents



## Appendix A – Definitions of Disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that is:

- substantial
- long term and
- has an adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal everyday activities

The definition is broad and includes a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, diabetes or epilepsy where the effect of the impairment on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities is adverse, substantial and long term.

The definition can include a wide range of impairments such as

- dyslexia
- autism
- speech and language impairments
- ADHD
- SEMH difficulties

An impairment does not in itself mean a person is disabled. It is the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities that has to be considered. Activities such as:

- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects
- speech, hearing and 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.

Details of disability are collected in the following ways:

- Pupils – from SEN register, medical record sheets and entry data sheets (SIMS) -  
Parents/carers – from disclosure to the school or from data entry sheets.
- Staff – disclosure to the Chief Executive Officer in confidence. From January 2008 this is part of our job application data.

Disability information will be audited according to type:

Type of Disability	Including	Comments
Physical impairment	Mobility difficulties, limb malformation, missing limb	
Sensory impairment	Sight and hearing impairment	Sight problems corrected with glasses or lenses do not qualify
Learning Difficulty, including Specific Learning Difficulty	Dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia	
Medical condition	Diabetes, arthritis, cancer, depression and many other conditions which require long term treatment	
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	Behaviour and emotional differences which impact on daily life such as ADHD, ASD and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	
Speech and language	Development delay or physical difficulties leading to additional Speech and Language needs	

## Appendix D

### Questionnaire to Parents

Dear Parent/Carer,

The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust is keen to make sure that we do not make it difficult for disabled children, young people and adults to be involved in every part of school life.

At the moment Directors, parents, staff and children are working on the Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Action Plan and we need the views of our parents and children.

Your child's name is entered on our records as suffering from an allergy, medical condition or specific learning difficulty as detailed below.

We would be grateful if you could talk to your child about the effect this may or may not have on his/her schooling and complete the attached questionnaire. If your child is very young and cannot answer themselves please complete the form giving your views.

As always, your assistance is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class : \_\_\_\_\_

Identified condition: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Does your child's condition affect them at school? YES/NO

If Yes please provide details -

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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2) What does the school do to support your child with their condition?

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3) What else could the school do to improve the support your child receives?

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4) Please provide any additional information you feel may be useful:

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*Continue on reverse if you need more space. Thank-you for your time.*