

"At Hilltop Infant School everyone will work together in a nurturing environment to provide each child with challenging opportunities that encourage a desire for life long learning"



Hilltop Infant School
Disability Equality Scheme

Ratified by the Governing Body on _____

Signature _____

Chair of Governors

Due for Review 2010

Disability Equality Scheme

Introduction

Hilltop Infant School welcomes its general responsibilities under the new Disability Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- 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 sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life.

We have set up a representative steering group to develop and monitor the scheme.

Karen Mackenzie	Headteacher and SENCO
David Harwood	Chair of Governors (Hearing impaired)
Rosemarie Lunn	Governor, Chair of Curriculum Committee
Angela Roberts-Stemp	Parent (her daughter Eloise has a statement of SEN)

Pupil involvement regarding relevant issues via School and class councils when appropriate.

School Ethos, Vision & Values

"At Hilltop Infant School everyone will work together in a nurturing environment to provide each child with challenging opportunities that encourage a desire for life long learning"



Representatives of our school community agreed the following values which underpin all that we do at Hilltop Infant School:

- Respect
- Enjoyment
- Self-Esteem
- Team Work
- Inclusion
- Pride
- Honesty
- Security
- Creativity
- High Aspirations

At Hilltop Infant School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, 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. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against disabled pupils.

The achievement of disabled pupils 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 disabled people 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.

The Hilltop Infant School Inclusion Policy details how we support pupils from all inclusion groups.

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'.

According to the Disability Discrimination Act, an impairment is to be treated as affecting the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, only if it affects 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 and perception of the risk of physical danger.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 has extended the definition of disability to include people with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer from the point of diagnosis. 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.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

How Disabled People have been Involved in the Scheme

Hilltop Infant School recognises the importance of involving disabled people fully in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme. We have involved disabled people in the following ways:

- We have identified our disabled pupils
- We have carried out an audit of the school grounds with a pupil who uses a wheelchair to assess accessibility
- Mr Harwood, our Chair of Governors, has been consulted about the ease with which those with hearing impairments can participate in school life
- Parents have been asked about our strengths and weaknesses in working with their disabled children

Pupils

Key issues identified which relate to our pupils were:

- The inaccessibility of our Robin's Rest Wildlife Garden

Disabled Staff

We have asked all staff to identify any disabilities that affect them and how we can plan to overcome any potential barriers. No members of staff made any comments about disabilities which affect them.

Disabled parents/carers

We have given all parents/carers a questionnaire to identify any barriers and how we can improve the way we meet their needs.

Key issues identified by our disabled parents/carers were:

- The lack of disabled parking bays in the car park
- Additional support to be made available to support children at after school clubs
- The provision of suitably adapted transport for school trips

Disabled members of the local community

- One of our governors, who has hearing loss, has requested that members of the governing body speak up and address questions separately to facilitate his participation in meetings

At present we have been unable to identify any other disabled members of the local community who use our facilities but we plan to give a questionnaire to all groups which make use of our facilities, asking them to identify any barriers and suggest reasonable adjustments.

How we have gathered information on the effect of our policies and practices on disabled people.

We recognise that our policies and practices may impact on disabled people and in particular on:

- the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
- on the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils

We acknowledge that information gathered from a wide range of sources will be required in order to identify the actions which we need to take to promote disability equality. We will ensure that information is gathered in relation to both employment and the delivery of our services. The processes we use for gathering information will include:

- Questionnaires to parents, carers and other members of the school community
- Use of the school website and e-mail to seek views about policies
- The collation of end of year feedback forms from families

- Participation in the Essex Well-being Project which seeks the views of staff
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Pupil Achievement

The progress of children with special educational needs will be tracked by our SENCO and progress of disabled children will be tracked by our Inclusion Manager.

Learning Opportunities

We consult with families about the ease with which their children can access extended schools opportunities.

Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions

Effective links with pre-school settings, families and other schools help us to determine whether prospective pupils and existing pupils have additional needs.

Social Relationships

“Socially speaking” groups are arranged where appropriate, to improve social relationships between disabled pupils and non-disabled pupils. Progress is monitored by the staff involved.

Employing, Promoting and Training Disabled Staff

We declare that we are an equal opportunities employer and all staff have access to training opportunities in line with our inclusive ethos.

We recognise that all our school’s policies may have an impact on the participation and outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the local community. We have agreed a programme to review the impact of policies and this is contained in our action plan. From January 2008 all new and reviewed policies will be equality impact assessed in line with the Disability Equality Duty Code of Practice.

Our Action Plan

We have produced a disability equality action plan to ensure that we fulfil our general and specific duties under the Disability Equality Duty.

Our existing accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to improve:

- curriculum access
- provision of information to disabled pupils, families and the wider community
- physical access

We have now incorporated this plan into our overall Disability Equality Scheme action plan.

Reporting

We will report annually about the progress we make on promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people. Our annual report will include details of:

- information we have gathered during the year
- how this information was used
- action points completed during the year and those that are ongoing

We will ensure that disabled people are involved in this process.

The annual report be incorporated into other documents published by schools annually including the school prospectus and school website.

Revisiting the Scheme

Our scheme will be reviewed and revised after a period of 3 years and disabled people will be involved in the process. A new action plan will be produced, responding to issues identified through our impact assessment and included in our annual reports.

Review Date December 2010

Senior Member of Staff Responsible Karen Mackenzie Headteacher

Governor Responsible David Harwood