



Kirkoswald C of E School

Trust
Accessibility Plan

Friendship

Forgiveness

INTRODUCTION

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Sex Discrimination Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas.

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in a number of ways. The overriding principle of equalities legislation is generally one of equal treatment.

However, the provisions in relation to disability are different in that you may, and often must, treat a disabled person more favourably than a non-disabled person.

There are some minor differences around disability in the new Act when compared with the previous legislation.

- The Equality Act does not list the types of day to day activities which a disabled person must be unable to carry out to meet the definition
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The fact that it must be 'reasonable' provides the necessary test.
- Direct discrimination against a disabled person can no longer be justified (bringing it into line with the definition of direct discrimination generally).
- From September 2012 schools and local authorities will be under a duty to supply auxiliary aids and services as reasonable adjustments where these are not being supplied through a statement of SEND.

As in previous legislation a school must not discriminate against a pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

It is unlawful for a school to treat a disabled pupil unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Harassment

Direct discrimination can never be justified but a school could justify indirect discrimination against a disabled pupil, and discrimination arising from a disability if the discrimination is the result of action that is a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Equality Act 2010: a person has a disability if:

- they have a physical or mental impairment;
- the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purposes of the Act, these words have the following meanings:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial;
- 'long-term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions);
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

People who have had a disability in the past that meets this definition are also protected by the Act.

Progressive conditions considered to be a disability

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with some visual impairment are automatically deemed to be disabled.

Conditions that are specifically excluded

Some conditions are specifically excluded from being covered by the disability definition, such as a tendency to set fires or addictions to non-prescribed substances.

It should be noted that this definition is not just regarding physical difficulties but also covers a wide range of:

- Sensory difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Impairment resulting from, or consisting of, a mental illness

In addition, there is a range of 'hidden impairments' such as

- Dyslexia
- Speech and Language Impairments
- Autism
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Impairment does not itself mean that a pupil is disabled but rather it is the effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in one or more of the following areas that has to be considered:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical coordination
- 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

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils:

- When something we do places a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage to other pupils, we must take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage;
- We will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so, and where such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage the pupil faces in comparison to his non-disabled peers.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment can no longer be justified. The test is whether the adjustment is reasonable, and if it is then there can be no justification for why it is not made. We will not be expected to make adjustments that are not reasonable.

There is as yet no clarity on what may be 'reasonable' although the Code of Practice will include factors that should be taken into account. It will be for us to decide the reasonableness of adjustments based on the individual circumstances of each case. Factors to consider may include the financial or other resources available, the effectiveness of the adjustment, its effect on other pupils, health and safety requirements, and whether aids have been made available through the SEND route.

The reasonable adjustments duty is intended to complement the accessibility planning duties, and the existing SEND statement provisions, under which Local Authorities have to provide auxiliary aids and services where a statement details that provision. When a disabled pupil does not have a statement of SEND (or the statement does not provide the necessary aid) then the duty to consider reasonable adjustments and provide such auxiliary aids will fall to the school.

As in the previous legislation we are not under a duty to make alterations to the physical environment though we should be planning to do so as part of our Accessibility planning.

AIMS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

The planning duties on schools/settings and Local Authorities are the same as the duties in the previous DDA. Schools/settings are required to have an Accessibility Plan detailing how they will improve access to the physical environment, increase access to the curriculum for disabled pupils, and how they will improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils. The LA is required to have an Access Strategy.

In **Kirkoswald C of E School**, we have a commitment to equal opportunities for all members of the school community and our Accessibility Plan outlines our intention to remove barriers for disabled pupils and to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the different areas of the national curriculum, increase access to extra-curricular activities and the wider school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of schools/settings to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Furthermore, under our equality duties, we intend to improve the physical environment of the school to enable any disabled person (pupil, parent/carer, employees or visitor) to access facilities and services and improve the availability of accessible information to any disabled person.

This Accessibility Plan will, therefore, **begin the process of addressing the needs of disabled people** through specific targets.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan. Compliance with the disability duty under the Equality Act is consistent with the school's aims and Single Equality Scheme, and the operation of the school's SEND policy.

The Action Plan for physical accessibility relates in part, to the Asset Management Plan (access section) of the School, which is undertaken regularly by the Local Authority. It may not be feasible to undertake some of the works during the life of this Accessibility Plan and therefore some items will roll forward into subsequent plans. The Plan will need to be revisited prior to the end of each first three-year plan period in order to inform the development of the new Plan for the following period.

Kirkoswald C of E School strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of our Accessibility Plan are as follows:

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.
- We are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are committed to challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.
- We are committed to providing all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles; and we endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum Framework which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:
 - setting suitable learning challenges;
 - responding to a pupil's diverse learning needs;
 - overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Kirkoswald C of E School is a Voluntary Controlled School located in the rural village of Kirkoswald Cumbria 8 miles North East of Penrith
- NOR: 60 in Main School,
- PAN: 14– 3 mixed aged classes:
- Class 1: Reception, Year 1 and 2
- Class 2: Year 3 and 4
- Class 3: Year 5 and 6
- SEN - 0 pupils on the Special Needs register.
- FSM – 5 pupil currently eligible for Free School Meals.
- Attendance – overall authorised and unauthorised absences are below the national average.
- Vast majority of children white British.
- No fixed term exclusions recorded
- Pupils from a range of socio-economic backgrounds
- Strong farming link and wide rural catchment area.

- 1 PLAC.
- Staff have areas of responsibility according to strengths and experience. Teaching assistants are deployed in every class bringing specific skills
- Collaboration with other local schools, local Secondary School, and local community (church, Parish Council, KEG and Allotment group)
- The school has gained an excellent reputation over the last few years.
- The staff work effectively as a team
- Children at the school are offered a wide range of opportunities to excel in sport and the Arts as well as taking part in their local community.
- The Governing Board is very active and supportive of the school. The constitution of the different committee's best utilises the skills and knowledge of its members.

DEVELOPMENT

The Purpose and Direction of the School's Plan: Vision and Values

KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL

- has high ambitions for all its pupils including those with a disability and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;
- is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled pupils in all aspects of school life;
- values the individual and the contribution they make to all aspects of school life;
- will strive to ensure that its disabled pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and teaching resources so as to develop fully in their education;
- acknowledges a commitment to embrace the key requirements set out in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement;
- is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

Information from Pupil Data and School Audit

Key starting point should be assessments of:

- The nature of the school population for whom the school is planning;
- The nature of the school, including a consideration of the impact of the school's existing plans and priorities.

Pupil information will include a range of data:

- Pupils already in school and moving through it.
- The nature of the future intake (advance information from pre-school/primary school etc.)

There should be some sort of audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses in working with disabled pupils. This might include:

- the level of staff awareness of Equalities legislation;
- the presence of disabled pupils and their participation in the life of the school, for example, patterns of attendance and exclusions, areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access, the participation of disabled pupils in after school clubs and school visits, parts of the school to which disabled pupils have no or limited access;
- the impact on disabled pupils of the way the school is organised, for example, school policies and practices around supporting pupils with medical conditions, timetabling, anti-bullying strategies, off-site visits and teaching and learning;
- the physical environment of the school;
- the curriculum;
- the ways in which information is currently provided for disabled pupils;
- outcomes for disabled pupils including exams and end of key stage results and achievements in extra-curricular activities.

The detail and amount of information gathered to complete this section will depend upon a number of factors not least of which is the size of the school. Equally, in reporting the findings it will be necessary to include enough detail to be informative but not so much as to breach confidentiality.

The school has identified that we have, as at the start of the academic year **2022/2023**, **0** pupils are regarded as disabled under the terms of the DDA.

Our annual development plan takes into account the needs of our diverse pupil population as well as the needs of its wider community.

In order to ensure that our data is up to date and accurate we will:

- liaise with the Local Authority so as to identify and therefore plan a response to pupils with a disability well before they arrive;
- improve the information dissemination from our Learning Support facility;
- implement a system that allows parents to inform us if they themselves have a disability;
- identify early on in their school career any obstacles to the effective learning of disabled pupils;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual pupil learning patterns;
- use information supplied via previous LA Asset Management/Accessibility Audits to assist us to develop an action plan to reduce obstacles for the school community.

Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

The plan will be informed by:

- The views and aspirations of disabled pupils themselves;
- The views and aspirations of the families of disabled pupils;
- The views and aspirations of other disabled people or voluntary organisations;
- The priorities of the local authority;

KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that **KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL** provides the best choices for pupils wanting to enrol here;
- consult the full governing board/SEND governor/relevant committee;
- consult staff including specifically SENDCo, safety committee;
- set up a structure to allow the views of pupils, both able and disabled to be taken into account;
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for disabled pupils and any developments they feel would be of use to the pupils and also offer parents alternative ways of answering the survey;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled pupils in their education and future careers;
- ensure the views of ALL those consulted are taken into consideration and the plan modified where reasonable to meet the needs of stakeholders;

SCOPE OF THE PLAN

Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum:

- to investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled pupils to access can be improved;
- to further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice/participation of disabled pupils;
- to investigate alternative provision/routes and collaboration that will assist disabled pupils to learn including liaison with the LA Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Statementing and Provision Team.

The school plans to increase access to the **curriculum** for pupils with a disability, expanding the curriculum as necessary to ensure that pupils with a disability are as, equally, prepared for life as are the able-bodied pupils. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities or off-site visits. It also covers the provision of specialist **aids and equipment**, which may assist these pupils in accessing the curriculum. The school will continue to seek and follow the advice of LA services, such as specialist teacher advisers and SEND inspectors/advisers, and of appropriate health professionals from the local NHS Trusts.

Governors will identify action in the school access plan to enhance teaching and learning opportunities for all those in the school community with disabilities, and may include:

- *consideration of whole-school ways of increasing participation in activities such as after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, as well as off-site visits, particularly for difficult-to-include pupil groups, such as those with physical or behavioural challenges;*
- *how threats to participation have been analysed using risk assessment proforma and action taken to reduce those identified risks;*
- *identifying how classroom support arrangements, such as deployment of teaching assistants, provision of ICT, contribute to, and enhance learning opportunities;*

- *deciding how the implementation of specific strategies such as flexible or shared timetabling, nurture groups, counselling provision, access to therapy, first day absence response, have enhanced attendance and participation;*
- *consideration of how classroom/group organisation has been targeted to ensure that all pupils achieved increased levels of school success;*
- *description of action to increase curriculum choice and/or flexibility has enhanced the access to appropriate qualifications/attainments;*
- *consideration of the school response to pupils through the application of the SEND Code of Practice has improved pupil attainment and how effective communication regarding specific pupil needs has been achieved and is monitored;*
- *consideration of how liaison, increased communication and relationships with external agencies has supported and enhanced pupils' access to the curriculum and how this is monitored, and improvements targeted;*
- *identifying how staff training needs in order to effectively meet the diverse abilities and disabilities of all pupils, including prospective pupils who may require manual handling, signing, personal hygiene support etc. has been identified and supported;*
- *identifying pupil peer support mechanisms and the ways that the school has ensured pupils have a voice in decisions that affect them;*
- *taking action to ensure that disabled members of the school community are seen in a positive light through publications promoting disability and providing positive role models of adults with disabilities to encourage success and achievement;*
- *ensuring that action has been undertaken to ensure that parents and carers see themselves as partners in their children's education and are increasingly willing to actively support their children's education;*
- *enhancing the positive culture and ethos of the school by undertaking quality marks or other additional intervention to improve the school's ability to include those with disabilities.*

Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services

- in consultation with the LA (where necessary and appropriate) investigate various improvements to the site;
- improve accessibility points to different curriculum areas;
- investigate ways of making the site more accessible to both disabled parents and adult users.

The school will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings. This is required regardless of whether the school has pupils or visitors with disabilities and is preparation for a situation when they do.

In maintained schools the provision of a special piece of equipment or extra assistance will generally be made through the SEND framework and to a lesser extent through the planning duty which applies to all schools. The distinction between auxiliary aids and services provided through the SEND route and those provided under the planning duty is that the SEND duties relate to the individual, whereas the planning duty relates to the provision of aids or services in terms of the population (and future population) of the school.

Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are disabled

KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL will strive to:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired pupils;
- investigate alternative ways of providing access to information, software and activities;
- investigate ways of communicating effectively with disabled parents and carers and other disabled adult users of the site
- make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

Financial Planning and Control

The Headteacher with Staff, together with the Finance Committee will review the financial implications of the School Accessibility Plan as part of the normal budget review process.

The objective is that over time School Accessibility Plan actions will be integrated into the School Development Plan when the need arises.

KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments when applicable. Management, coordination and implementation of these actions will be carried out following a disability audit using a cross section of staff, pupils and parents when required. As a result of the audit, we shall:

- produce action plans, with definite time scales for the implementation of the actions implicit in the plan;
- plan to provide workshops so staff can understand the Accessibility Plan;
- present the plan to the governing board for their approval;
- modify the plan based on the views of stakeholders;
- review the plan and the associated action plans to see if milestones are being met.

This plan will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary every three years.

Monitoring

KIRKOSWALD C OF E SCHOOL recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.

Accessing the School's Plan

- Plans could be made to investigate symbol software to support learners with reading difficulties.
- Raising awareness of font size and page layouts will support pupils with visual impairments.
- Auditing the school library to ensure the availability of large font and easy read texts will improve access.
- Auditing signage around the school to ensure that is accessible to all is a valuable exercise.
- Auditing the use of, and methods of displaying materials around the school.

RELATED POLICIES

The Accessibility Plan should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and documents:

- **Asset Management Plan**
- **Complaints Procedures**
- **Educational Visits policy**
- **Health & Safety policy**
- **Inclusion policy**
- **School Development Plan, (to include staff/governor training and development)**
- **Single Equality Scheme/Objectives**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy**
- **Whole School Behaviour policy**

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