

Westfield Middle School
Accessibility plan

2013 - 15

'Achievement for All'

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- 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 of information to disabled pupils

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. In addition, Disability Equality Duty (2006) required all schools to:

- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- eliminate harassment of those with a disability
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled individuals
- take steps to take account of disabilities even if this involves treating disabled persons more favourably

This duty requires schools to:

- involve those with a disability in producing a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan
- publish the DES/Action Plan
- demonstrate they have taken action identified to achieve outcomes
- report on progress, review and revise the DES annually

1. Vision and Values

At Westfield Middle School we aim to ensure that all our pupils, whatever their ability, reach the highest level of achievement possible. Our school is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and strives to create a caring community demonstrating mutual respect, understanding and tolerance.

We have a responsibility to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. We aim to achieve this through:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupils' individual needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning for individuals and groups of pupils

Improvements to our school environment have incorporated provision for all. This plan outlines the ongoing review and evaluation process and our aims to improve our facilities and access arrangements.

Westfield Middle School – Disability Equality & Accessibility Plan Aims

- to increase the involvement of those with disabilities in deciding action that impacts on them.
- to increase access for those with a disability to the physical environment of the school, the curriculum and ensure equality in regards to access to information.
- to evaluate and report to parents on the success of the action plan in meeting its targets.

We value the presence of every child, irrespective of need. We are sensitive and proactive about devising ways in which a child with any disability can undertake virtually all, if not all, of the same activities and curriculum as other students. Students with learning difficulties and those who need extension to their learning are given suitable additional help following consultation.

Improvements to the school site and buildings have incorporated provision for disability in adults and children. This plan outlines the ongoing review and evaluation process and our aims to improve our facilities and access arrangements.

As a place of employment

As a place of employment Westfield Middle School will strive to meet the needs of all staff and to support their full inclusion into the workplace. When necessary, adjustments are undertaken to enable staff to fully access all areas of the school.

As a Community Resource

As a school we strive to provide a community resource that is completely accessible to all stakeholders.

Purpose

The purpose of Westfield Middle School's Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan will be to assess and evaluate the present provision; to systematically remove all barriers in all areas of the school. This will help to address any disadvantages experienced by those people with a disability.

Westfield Middle School Self Review

Individual Disability Audit

To commence the process of completing the accessibility plan the School will undertake a disability audit of the existing school community. This will be developed by a working party, consisting of:

- governors
- member of SLT
- SENCO
- a teacher
- a member of support staff
- site manager
- finance manager
- parents
- a group of students

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 defines an individual with a disability as one who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (at least 12 months) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Disability may include:

- physical or mobility impairment
- visual impairment
- hearing impairment

- developmental difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autistic spectrum disorders
- medical conditions
- mental health difficulties

Environment & Procedure Audit

Westfield Middle School undertakes a high level of CPD and training that enables staff to have an awareness of disability and understand their duty to provide reasonable adjustments. An audit will be undertaken to identify any barriers to access and to highlight present practice.

The Act applies to all activities/facilities provided for students such as:

- preparation for entry into school
- the curriculum and learning and teaching
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- grouping of students
- access to school facilities
- extracurricular activities
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes and interaction with peers
- assessment and exam arrangements
- school discipline and sanctions and exclusion procedures
- school arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for transition to the next phase of education, mainstream or special.

We aim that the school welcomes students with all levels of disability into the school community and it actively encourages them to participate fully in the life of the school. It is recognised that in some situations the nature of the disability requires reasonable adjustment by staff to meet their needs. All school policies, practices and procedures are developed, written and evaluated with regards to the special needs of the students and other stakeholders.

The school's curriculum is developed to enable those with a disability to access all areas; further development will be highlighted in the accessibility plan.

Information about the school is provided in a written format via letters, prospectus, newsletters and the website. The need to provide alternative formats is noted and will be addressed.

The School Development Plan and the SEF are working documents via which the school strives to increase its capacity to adjust and adapt to the changing needs of all stakeholders. Relevant sections will be included in the accessibility plan.

Alterations over time have resulted in improved facilities for those with a disability but there is scope for further development following consultation in a three year programme of accessibility.

Developing the DEP and AS Plan

This will need to include looking at:

1. Participation in the school curriculum:
 - the impact the delivered curriculum has upon students with disabilities
 - the effectiveness of short term planning in identifying the range of reasonable adjustments being made
 - the appropriate deployment of adult and peer support
 - how the curriculum supports awareness of and positive attitudes towards disability
 - effective access to specialist advice and support
2. The physical environment of Westfield Middle School
 - improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings
 - improvements to toilets, washing and changing facilities
 - changes to the layout of the school grounds and communal areas
 - the provision of ramps and lifts and improvements to doorways
 - the provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access
3. The delivery to all stakeholders of information that is currently provided in written format only. Information to be reviewed:
 - handouts
 - timetables
 - worksheets

- notices
- school website
- letters
- prospectus
- information about school events

The working party will explore other methods of delivering information and the preferences expressed by students and parents.

4. Management, co-ordination and implementation

The plan will be reviewed annually by the working party which will meet with representatives of the stakeholders and present the outcomes to the Governors and SLT. The plan will be revised as necessary as directed by the Governors.

5. Publishing the DES/AP

The DES/AP will be available on the school website as it forms part of the school prospectus. Parents will also be able to request a hard copy from the school.

Action	Success Criteria	Time scale	Review/Outcome	Next Review
Collaborate with cluster schools to agree action to support those in the school community with a disability.	Joint meetings arranged and attended		Through transition develop a more systematic approach and promote inclusion	
Increase knowledge of disability and disability legislation in order to facilitate the raising of the awareness of whole school regarding duties.	Disability awareness cascaded to whole school		Staff informed through full staff meetings of DDA visits and developments	

Undertake audit of school policies and procedures to establish baseline of present level of disability discrimination	Disability awareness cascaded to whole school Audit		Staff informed through full staff meetings of DDA visits and developments annual review of policies Amendments taken to Governing Body for ratification.	
Disability audit of Students, staff, governors, volunteers	Audit		completed audit	
Agree target areas and ensure that these are included within the School Improvement Development Plan and that resources are identified to ensure their implementation	Targets agreed by SLT		New Working Party in development to ensure a more systematic approach and promote ownership	
Increase access to the curriculum by: Provide reading aids required to suit student needs Provide handheld word processors for classroom use where necessary Annual review of LSA/SEN support	Audit undertaken/ Aids Purchased Review undertaken		Purchasing through Review by Business Manger and SENCO	

<p>Increase access to the physical environment by:</p> <p>Development of accessible toilet facilities for staff/visitors and students in main school</p> <p>Improve signage around school site</p>	<p>Funding secured</p> <p>Work undertaken</p>	<p>DDA visit & report</p> <p>Governors discuss and submit recommendations to Full Board.</p>	<p>Visit and report completed</p> <p>Visit and cost of works completed</p> <p>Proposed works agreed by Board</p>	
<p>Increase to written materials by: Audit readability of school prospectus</p> <p>Check readability of school website</p> <p>Check readability/style of Newsletter</p>	<p>Audit</p>		<p>Review – New format in development - Ongoing</p>	
<p>Agree and formalise systematic procedure that collect views of reasonable adjustments by students with a disability, their parents or carers</p>	<p>Annual Questionnaire, written and symbolic to parents and students</p>		<p>New Working Party in development to ensure a more systematic approach and promote ownership</p>	
<p>Agree process to publish on the success of the action plan in reducing</p>	<p>Summer Term Newsletter and Website</p>		<p>New Working Party in development to ensure a more systematic</p>	

discrimination and identifying further targets			approach and promote ownership	
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