



DORMSTON SCHOOL

Accessibility Policy

Introduction

It is the overall aim of the Dormston School to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that the schools facilities, services, policies and procedures are made accessible to pupils, staff members, visitors, governors and other stakeholders who have disabilities, to comply with our moral and legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

This accessibility Policy is compliant with current legislation and requirement as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010. The School Governing Body is accountable for ensuring the implementation, review and reporting on progress of the Accessibility plan.

We will ensure through the Head teacher and Senior Management team that all staff are aware of how these duties should be implemented in their specific areas of responsibility. At the Dormston School, we embrace diversity and want pupils to reach their full educational potential. The school is committed to ensuring quality of opportunity for all. For this to become a reality, we must ensure that all barriers to learning are removed and all pupils have equal access to all areas of learning. This accessibility plan will endeavour to ensure that all pupils with a disability have equal access to the school site and curriculum so that they may take advantage of the opportunities presented to them by the school.

Access

The main building of the school was built during the 1920's, as such our physical facilities for disabled persons are limited. We will however make every reasonable adjustment in order to accommodate the needs of applicants, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and members of staff who have disabilities.

Dedicated disabled parking bays are located in the school main car park, adjacent to the accessibility ramp, with access available through all entrance points (all flat access). Access between each floor in A block is by stairwell only, the school has previously investigated the feasibility of installing a lift and or stair lift and have been advised that

neither was possible within the buildings present structure, taking into account the limited Health & Safety access and egress routes. Block B, C and D built during the 1960's & 70's are limited by the same barriers. There is access to the main school atrium area and E blocks upper floors by lift access.

There are Evacuation chairs situated upon the landings of A, B, C and D block stairwells for emergency evacuation of pupils with limited mobility if deemed necessary by the fire marshal in these areas.

The school shall endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to aid pupils, staff and visitors. Such adjustments may include (but are not limited too):

- installing low grade ramps for easy access to the ground floor;
- allocating a classroom on the ground floor;
- specialist seating or other relevant classroom resources or equipment.

In defining what is reasonable the school shall take into account:

- the cost and feasibility of making specific alterations to the school premises. (This will be undertaken via the Local Authority).
- implications on financial resources to the school and local authority and the likelihood of funding being available to offset this.
- staffing requirements.
- health & safety considerations.
- the interest of the pupil, staff member of visitor.

Schools are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features, like adding ramps. They must make the buildings accessible for their disabled pupils as part of their overall planning duties.

The DDA Act does not override health and safety legislation for the school.

Aims & Objectives

The policy will:

- define 'disability';
- be embedded in a culture of high expectations for all;
- be guided by the Special Educational Needs Policy;
- respond to the views of pupils and parents/carers;
- demonstrate a commitment to developing access to the School for all pupils;
- show commitment to the effective and sustainable use of resources;
- be clear about how it will be evaluated.

Factors to be taken into account:

Without intending to be exhaustive, the following are some of the factors that are likely to be taken into account when considering what adjustments it is reasonable for a school to have to make:

- The extent to which special educational provision will be provided to the disabled pupil under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The resources of the school and the availability of financial or other assistance.
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustment.
- The structure, layout and physical facilities of the school.
- The extent to which taking any particular step would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled pupil.
- The practicability of the adjustment.
- The effect of the disability on the individual.
- Health and safety requirements.
- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards.
- The interests of other pupils and prospective pupils.

Disability and the School Culture

Definition (Equality Act 2010)

The Disability Discrimination Act describes a disability as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect upon their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities” Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments. In the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) substantial means ‘more than minor or trivial’, long-term means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

- we are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. We are further committed to challenging attitudes about disability and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion within Dormston School;
- we will regularly evaluate with a view of continuous improvement of accessibility for all pupils, staff and visitors to the School;
- it is acknowledged that there will be the need for an ongoing raising of awareness and training for all staff and governors in the matter of disability discrimination.

The Act does not override health and safety legislation. If making a particular adjustment would increase the risks to the health and safety of any person (including the disabled pupil in question), then this is a relevant factor in deciding whether it is reasonable to make that adjustment.

Ordinarily, the interests of other pupils regarding the reasonable adjustments required by a disabled pupil will be irrelevant. However, there are limited circumstances in which the provision of a particular reasonable adjustment for a disabled pupil will disadvantage other pupils. This is relevant only where the adjustment results in significant disadvantage for other pupils. In such a case, it may not be reasonable to expect the school to make the adjustment.

Admissions

Parents/Carers of prospective pupils must notify the school of any disabilities in advance of registration and must discuss with the school what adjustments could reasonably be made to accommodate their child. The school may request a full report from a doctor or educational psychologist to help determine whether it can properly fulfil its legal and moral responsibilities to the child and its contractual duties to the parents/carers.

In particular, the school will do all it reasonably can to ensure the child can, with reasonable adjustments, access the curriculum, whether in the classroom or through other means. The school also expects all of its pupils to participate in sports, music, drama, trips and extended schools activities as part of its ethos of inclusiveness, but we will ensure that no pupil's education or safety is put at risk by the needs of another individual.

Existing Pupils (Withdrawal of a Pupil)

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing pupils which may require adjustments to be made to the way in which the curriculum is delivered. Parents/Carers must disclose to the school in confidence any known medical condition, health problem or allergy affecting existing pupils. If following the process of consultation and the making of all reasonable adjustments, it is the professional judgement of the head teacher that the school cannot provide adequately for the pupils disability or special educational needs, parents/carers will be asked to withdraw the pupil, in such cases every reasonable effort shall be made by the school assist in finding a suitable placement in another school.

Existing Staff Members

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing staff members which may require adjustments to the way in which they are employed. Existing staff members must, as soon as possible, disclose any known medical condition or health problem. Where appropriate the head teacher shall set up a consultation process through occupational health so interim measures can be put in place to support the staff member, any long term requirements may be determined. The school to the best of its ability will make such adjustments as are reasonably practicable to allow the staff member to continue at the school.

Monitoring and Evaluating

In the process of its review the school will take into consideration the views of disabled pupils, their parents/carers and care providers in the community as well as the Local Authority and will review the following:

1. Adequate resources
2. Implementation
3. Review
4. Revise as necessary
5. Renew annually
6. Available to parent/carer

Opinions of the pupil and parents/carers and outside professional's will be regularly sought. If parents/carers think that their child has been discriminated against, they have a right of redress by making a claim of disability discrimination to the SEN and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST). If the tribunal finds that a school has discriminated unlawfully against a disabled student it can order any remedy that it sees fit, except financial compensation.

Improving Access for Disabled Pupils

This policy addresses the three strands of the statutory requirements, on the basis on which the action plan will be drawn up and regularly reviewed:

Increasing access for disabled pupils to the School curriculum. This covers teaching and learning and the wider curriculum of the School such as participation in after school events, leisure and cultural activities or school visits.

Improving access to the physical environment of schools. This covers improvements to the physical environment of the School where reasonable and physical aids to access education. Schools are not subject to the reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features, like adding ramps. They must make the buildings accessible for their disabled pupils as part of their overall planning duties, where reasonable practicable.

Improving the delivery of written information to disabled pupils. This will include planning to make written information that is normally provided by the School to its pupils available to disabled pupils. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about School events.

Curriculum

At the Dormston, we will guarantee that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum provided and have the opportunity to take advantage of the education that Dormston provides. We will do this in the following ways:

- ensuring all members of staff have the necessary training to support disabled pupils;

- staff are continuously monitoring their teaching to allow for any changes to improve the experience of disabled pupils;
- classrooms are suitably arranged for disabled pupils;
- lessons are taught with equal opportunities for all pupils;
- all pupils are encouraged to take part in a range of activities, such as music, drama and sport;
- staff recognise that additional time may need to be spent with disabled pupils;
- alternative methods of teaching are considered to allow access to all areas of the curriculum, particularly in areas such as physical education;
- access to computer technology is suitable for pupils with disabilities;
- ensuring that any school visits are accessible for disabled pupils and are staffed accordingly;
- staff are committed to breaking down barriers to learning, and embracing diversity.

Physical access within the School

As well as full access to the curriculum, pupils with a disability must feel comfortable around the school site and we must ensure that any difficulties they have with physical access around the school site are removed or at least reduced. This is done in the following ways:

- ensuring that the size and layout of areas around the school allow access for all pupils;
- all pupils have full access to facilities, such as toilets and showers;
- pathways used by pupils around the school site are logical, well signed and safe;
- emergency systems are set up to inform all pupils;
- evacuation procedures are in place for all pupils and any barriers or issues are considered;
- ensuring that all signage is clear and not confusing for disabled pupils;
- maintaining areas correctly and guaranteeing they are well lit;
- all furniture and equipment is selected and located appropriately.

Delivery of material in other formats

At the Dormston, we guarantee that all pupils have full access to materials and provide alternatives for those who struggle with current formats. Information can be provided in alternative forms such as large print or braille for pupils who have difficulty with the standard form.

- information is presented in a user friendly manner to ensure that it is accessible for pupils with disabilities;
- training staff so that they are familiar with technology and practices developed to assist pupils with disabilities.

Equality Impact Assessment

This policy sets out the actions that will be taken to assess the impact or potential impact of school policies on the school community. These assessments include Equality Impact Assessments to identify the effect of school policies on people who are disabled, males and

females, people from different ethnic groups, people with different religious beliefs and sexual orientation or people of transgender. The Dormston School takes guidance from Dudley Council on all policies that are adopted through the council procedures. We recognise that this policy is designed with disabled people in mind. This policy has been undertaken in consultation with school members, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, school governors and the Local authority.

Information

The school will gather and report on a range of information relating to staff members and pupils with disabilities. This information shall be provided and evaluated by the resources committee and reported to the governing body. The report will where necessary include an analysis by specific disability to determine whether the needs of the pupil have been met. The recommendations of the report will feed into the schools Disability Equality Action Plan. The range of information to be gathered will include:

Pupils: participation, achievement, success, attendance, access to additional support, progression, student surveys, pupil voice, complaints and compliments.

Staff: Recruitment, promotion, training, career progression, absence, retention and staff surveys.

Parents/Carers: Surveys and feedback.

Review

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually each September in preparation for the new financial year. The report will focus on management, co-ordination and development. Following the review the action plan will be updated.