



### St Mary's Disability Equality Scheme/ Accessibility Plan (DES/AP)

The SEN and Disability Act (2001) extended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) 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.
- To plan to **increase access** to education for disabled pupils.

**This duty requires schools** to produce an **Accessibility Plan** that identifies the action the schools intends to take over a three year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas, is published and evaluated annually. The three areas include:

- 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 to disabled pupils **of information which is provided in writing** for pupils who are not disabled.

In addition, the 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

### 1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

At St.Mary's, we believe that every member of the school community is a 'teacher' and a 'learner' and should experience and recognise a high standard of teaching and learning.

We aim for our Disability Equality Scheme/Accessibility Plan to reflect the key values of our school. These include the way that we respect each member of the school community, including disabled members, and value the rights and responsibilities of each individual. We are a school with a Christian foundation, characterised by a caring ethos which places importance on honesty, integrity, reflection, **equality**, peace, friendship and simplicity. We strive for high standards and challenge ourselves to further our own learning and understanding throughout the journey of life.

**We learn best when.....**

- **We feel happy, safe, valued and respected**
- **We belong to a whole school community that works together**
- **We have a stimulating and supportive learning environment which promotes independence and a safe and healthy lifestyle**
- **Careful planning provides relevant, memorable and exciting learning opportunities which challenge and motivate**
- **A range of teaching strategies meet our learning styles and needs**
- **We are active and there are opportunities for challenge, innovation and adventure**
- **We understand how to learn and are able to evaluate our progress and our success**

## **1B: Information from pupil data and school audit**

When considering the definition of disability, the school follows the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act definition. This 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'.

Members of staff at St.Mary's are represented on the working party which has been formed as part of school's DES. Information from working party meetings is shared with other staff and supplemented with national and county led directives. Members of staff have knowledge of the document 'Is Tom Disabled?' (see below) and have used this to broaden understanding. As a small school, all children are known to all members of staff, as are their individual needs. Registers contain information about children's medical needs so that supply teachers are aware of particular needs. Pupil progress is analysed and appropriate intervention planned to facilitate access to learning. Individual Education Plan targets are included in weekly planning for mathematics and English. The school promotes links with external agencies, seeking and taking advice regarding individual needs, for example through PARM meetings. Teachers and teaching assistants are present at PARM meetings and statement review meetings wherever possible.

When new policies are created, reference is made, where appropriate, to ensure that the school is complying with the DDA. The school will review existing policies to the same end . (See School Improvement Plan)

The School Improvement Plan for 2009-2010 will include information on developing the school premises and making it increasingly accessible.



## Is Tom Disabled?

Answering the four questions below will help you decide if Tom is disabled.

1. Does Tom have difficulty with any of the following 'normal day-to-day activities'?
  - Mobility: getting to/from school, moving about the school and/or going on school visits?
  - Manual dexterity: holding a pen, pencil or book, using tools in design and technology, playing a musical instrument, throwing and catching a ball?
  - Physical coordination: washing or dressing, taking part in games and physical education?
  - Ability to lift, carry or otherwise move every day objects: carrying a full school bag or other fairly heavy items?
  - Continence: going to the toilet or controlling the need to go to the toilet?
  - Speech: communicating with others or understanding what others are saying; how they express themselves orally or in writing?
  - Hearing: hearing what people say in person or on a video, DVD, radio or tape recording?
  - Eyesight: ability to see clearly (with spectacles/contact lenses where necessary), including visual presentations in the classroom?
  - Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand: work in school including reading, writing, number work or understanding information?
  - Perception of the risk of physical danger: inability to recognise danger, eg. when jumping from a height, touching hot objects or crossing roads?
2. Is Tom's difficulty caused by an underlying impairment or condition?
3. Has Tom's impairment or condition lasted, or is it likely to last, more than 12 months?
4. Is the effect of Tom's impairment or condition 'more than minor or trivial'?

### Answer

If you have answered yes to questions 1 to 4, then Tom is probably disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act. If Tom receives medical or other treatment to reduce or remove the effects of his condition, he may still be disabled. The test is whether the effects would recur if he were to stop his treatment.

*Last updated: 11 November 2009*

## 1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

St. Mary's has a working party which meets to formulate and review the DES/AP and related issues and development. The working party consists of:

- Headteacher
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator



- School Business Manager
- Governor
- Parent(s) of children that have been identified as having SEN
- Pupils with SEN/experience of needing provision for disability

The Working Party has already highlighted the need to ensure that all furniture purchased is flexible to the needs of disabled pupils and that flooring is not slippery. All paving stones need to be level and appropriately embedded into their surroundings.

## **2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.**

Please see Section 1B. In addition to this the SENCo carries out an analysis of the pupil progress for those children identified on the SEN Register. The SENCo also works with the Headteacher to identify which teaching assistants work best with individuals and allocate hours according to need. The school funds additional TA hours to those set out in guidelines to schools, as a way of making the curriculum as accessible as possible.

The school has a very caring ethos and this extends to the PSHCE curriculum and assemblies which promote individuality and the value that all individuals have as citizens.

## **2B: Improving the physical environment of the school**

When planning developments to the physical environment, attention will be paid to:

- Improvements to lighting, signage, colour contrast, the acoustic environment, floor coverings.
- Improvements to toilets, washing and changing facilities.
- Changes to the layout of the playground and other common areas.
- The provision of ramps and lifts and improvements to doorways.
- The provision of particular furniture and equipment to improve access.

Please see Section 1B regarding the Feasibility Study.

## **2C: Improving the delivery to disabled stakeholders of information that is provided in writing for those who are not disabled:**

As a school we endeavor to provide information in such a form as can be accessed by all stakeholders. Information for disabled stakeholders might include that provided through; handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, school websites, letters, prospectus, information about school events etc, through the use of Braille, large print, in simplified language, audio-tape, video-tape, sign language, symbol system, read aloud software etc. Identifying the appropriate format takes account of:

- The impairments: increasing access to information may be improved for particular groups of pupils by particular approaches.
- Preferences expressed by pupils or their parents.



### **3. Making it happen**

#### **3A: Management, coordination and implementation.**

The DES/AP Action Plan shows:

- How and when the plan will be reviewed and revised, including how anyone might contribute to that process.
- A mechanism for the evaluation of the plan.
- The evidence that will be used in the evaluation of the plan.

#### **3B: Publishing the school's plan**

This will be made available to all parents on request. Governors will receive regular updates via head teacher's termly report.

Review: Spring term 2015

