



APPLEBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2017 – 2020

APPROVED BY ¹:

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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

Schools 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 Appleby Primary 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 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 address the needs of disabled people through specific targets.

It is a requirement that the school's plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

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 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.

Appleby Primary 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

Appleby primary School is a rural school seventeen miles from Penrith set within the town of Appleby. Children are either living in the local area or are bussed in from the surrounding villages.

It is a Foundation School and, as such, the Governors are the employers.

It admits pupils from three years to eleven years old.

It has an integrated resource unit taking children with a wide range of additional needs.

There are 195 children currently on role.

Parts of the building are over 100 years old and a lift has been installed to gain wheelchair access from the entrance way to the main school. We have disabled toilet facilities.

DEVELOPMENT

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

Appleby Primary School:

- has high ambitions for its disabled pupils and expects them to participate and achieve in every aspect of school life;
- is committed to identifying and then removing barriers to disabled students 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;
- will continue to focus on removing barriers in every area of the life of the school;
- is committed to embracing equal opportunities for all members of the school community.

The school has identified that we will have, as at the start of the academic year 2017/2018, 9 students regarded as disabled under the terms of the DDA. These can be grouped as follows: undiagnosed statemented child 1, hearing impaired 1, physical mobility problems 1, Downs Syndrome 1, Autistic 1, ADHD 4. Our annual development plan takes into account the needs of our diverse student 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 students 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 students;
- use all available data to inform the planning of individual student learning behaviours;
- 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.

Appleby Primary School will:

- ensure the development of the plan involves coordination with the Local Authority in line with the LA Accessibility Strategy and ensure that Appleby Primary School provides the best choices for students wanting to enrol here;
- consult the full governing body where appropriate, SEND governor and relevant sub-committee;
- consult staff, specifically SENCo and Headteacher;
- set up a structure to allow the views of students, both able and disabled to be taken into account;
- survey parents/carers to ascertain their views on our provision for students and any developments they feel would be of use to the students;
- involve outside agencies who already exist to assist disabled students 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:

Appleby primary School will:

- investigate how the access to those areas of the curriculum that are normally difficult for disabled students to access can be improved;
- further investigate what support or alternative approaches can be adopted to increase the choice and participation of disabled students;
- investigate alternative provision, routes and collaboration that will assist disabled students 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.

The school has an integrated Resource Unit which attracts pupils with a wide range of disabilities and is staffed accordingly. Training is provided for staff to enable them to provide the best differentiated education for the children.

There is a governor (Sarah Lightfoot) designated to oversee all work with pupils who have additional needs and to ensure that school enhances its teaching and learning opportunities for all those with a disability within our setting.

The school ensures that pupils with a disability are invited to all residentials and after school activities.

We ensure that we only use companies that are fully able to cater for all pupils.

Sports Premium Funding is used to include all pupils in a wide range of sporting activities.

The Governors have ensured that the building is suitable for pupils and adults who need to use a wheelchair and disabled facilities.

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

The school has designated spaces for disabled parking, doors that are the suitable width for wheelchair access, rails to support the movement of children and adults around the building, disabled toilet facilities and a lift from the Integrated Resource Unit to the main school building to enable children to receive part of their education with their peers in the mainstream school.

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.

The building plan is updated annually and monitored three times a year by the Buildings, Health and Safety Committee.

Resources are purchased when necessary to aid the education of children with a disability; this is differentiated to the needs of each child.

At Appleby Primary School 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. For example, a pupil with visual impairment might have low vision aids provided through the statement of SEND but the school might as a general measure provide blinds and adjustable lighting and colour distinction through the planning duty.

The Governing Body will consider the following in all arrangements when pupils with disabilities are being admitted:

- Changes to improve access to doors, stairs, toilet, changing facilities, and consideration of the impact of signs, colour schemes and colour contrast, lighting, heating etc.
- Changes outside of the school building e.g. provision of disabled parking etc.
- Management and organisation issues such as maintenance of lights, fire alarms appropriate to those with hearing impairments etc.
- Increased access to and maintenance of, auxiliary aids, ICT apparatus such as computer hardware/software.
- Improvement to the acoustic environment that might include installation of soundfields/hearing loop systems.
- Improvements of storage implications for wheelchairs and other mobility devices.
- Application and progress on capital funding for major access works funded by the Schools Access Initiative through the Local Authority, and details on schools funds delegation to support targets such as provision of suitable floor coverings, furniture and layout of the playgrounds.

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

Appleby Primary School will strive to:

- produce all school literature at the correct font size to help visually impaired students;
- 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.

The school will improve the delivery of written information to pupils, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities where appropriate. Examples might include handouts, timetables, textbooks and information about the school and school events. The information can be made available in various preferred formats within a reasonable time frame. The school will make itself aware of local services, including those provided through the LA, for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.

The Governors of Appleby Primary School will strive to:

- Inform readers that school published material can be made available in a selection of formats e.g. Braille, Makaton, audio tapes and identifying how they can access this provision if requested;
- Consider how to increase information accessibility for those who have English as an additional language or other communication impairments, at school meetings etc;
- Identify how they have considered the readability of information including that provided by the school website, and how it is monitored to ensure accessibility to a wide range of diverse needs and abilities;
- Identify how textbooks and other pupil information are selected and provided to meet a diversity of pupil needs;
- Ensure the monitoring of effectiveness of adult support to enhance the opportunities for pupils and parents who have difficulties in accessing information.

Financial Planning and Control

The Head teacher with Senior Management Team, 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.

Appleby Primary School will finance the plan by identifying costs and incorporating them into current and future budget commitments.

IMPLEMENTATION

Appleby Primary School Leadership Team will:

- produce action plans where needed with definite time scales, for the implementation of actions we need to complete to improve our provision for current pupils with a disability and pupils wanting a place at Appleby Primary School. This will result from ongoing assessments of their needs led by the Headteacher and SENCo.
- where appropriate, provide training for staff on meeting the needs of the pupils.
- present any action plans to the governing body for their approval;
- review the plans to see if objectives are being met.

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

Monitoring

Appleby Primary School recognises that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning. This monitoring will be an integral part of the school's self- evaluation process where the progress of each child is monitored closely each term.

The school will achieve successful implementation of the accessibility plan with continued support in the areas of:

- providing training and awareness opportunities to staff, Governors and parents/carers on issues regarding equality and inclusion;
- providing targeted training for particular groups of pupils and staff;

- promoting collaboration through the provision of information and the sharing of good practice;
- encouraging liaison between other local schools including special schools;
- seeking support and advice from outside the school, from services, other agencies and organisations;
- ensuring that the school is aware of all support services that provide advice to schools and staff.

RELATED POLICIES AND INFORMATION

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

- School Website
- Health & Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Whole School Behaviour Policy
- School Development Plan
- Complaints procedure

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Plan to be reviewed April 2020