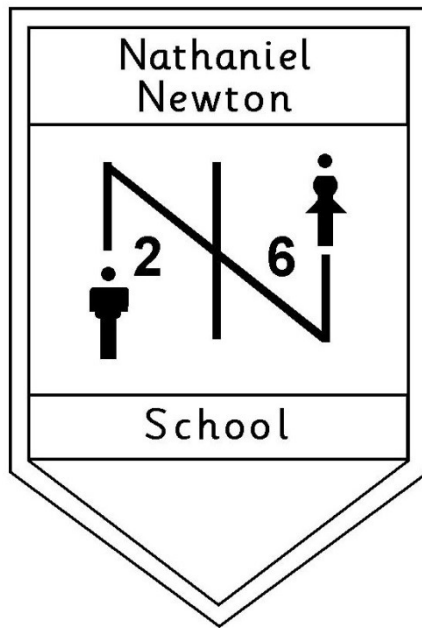


Nathaniel Newton Infant School



Disability and Equality Scheme

Warwickshire's Disability Equality Scheme

Nathaniel Newton Infant School

Suggested Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since 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 Scheme 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 to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually. Attached is an action plan showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

Part 5a of the DDA requires schools to publish a Disability Equality Scheme, which sets out how the school will:

- eliminate harassment related to a disability
- eliminate discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

The Scheme covers pupils, staff, parents and users of the school.

1. Starting points

1A: Vision and values: Nathaniel Newton School's Disability Equality Scheme.

Our statement of aims states that, at Nathaniel Newton, we aspire to create a welcoming, happy, inclusive, safe and secure environment in which we appreciate and celebrate diversity. It also states that we aim to provide a broad, balanced, stimulating curriculum in order to promote a lifelong love of learning for staff and children alike. We are equally ambitious for any disabled pupils and staff within our school community. Our response to the needs of any disabled children or staff is an integral part of the personalisation agenda.

The National Curriculum Inclusion statement reminds us that all teachers are required to follow three inclusive principles:

- Setting suitable learning challenges, enabling all children to experience success and achieve as high a standard as possible through appropriate differentiation.
- Responding to children's needs by:
 - creating effective learning environments;
 - securing their motivation and concentration;
 - providing equality of opportunity through teaching approaches;
 - using appropriate assessment approaches;
 - setting targets for learning.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

1B: Information from data and analysis of need

The disability

1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the Scheme

The content and the scope of the Scheme should be informed by:

- the views and aspirations of disabled children and young people themselves;
- the views and aspirations of the parents of disabled pupils;
- the views and aspirations of disabled staff;
- the views and aspirations of community users and voluntary organisations;
- the priorities of the local authority.

Consultation needs to be organised in a way that is accessible to the particular groups who are being consulted.

It is helpful to show how the views of different groups have influenced the Scheme.

2. Starting points

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

The priorities set in this section need to relate back to the information and data you have gathered and the consultations with pupils, staff, parents etc, as well as issues highlighted through your SEF.

Key elements in a successful planned approach are likely to be:

- high expectations;
- focussed and cost effective deployment of additional adults;
- appropriate pupil grouping and use of peer support.

Working in this way may raise challenges for existing policies and generate issues for wider school review, for example:

- use of SENCO time in a more strategic way;
- the responsibilities of subject leaders and middle leaders;
- the way that additional adults are deployed;
- timetabling;
- how the school plans to develop awareness of disability through the curriculum, assemblies, PSHE, Citizenship, visitors to the school;
- how successful developments in one area of school life are shared across the whole school;
- access to specialist advice and support.

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils, staff, parents and others can access education and associated services

Changes to the physical environment might include:

- improvements to access routes, reception areas, 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.

Different aspects of the physical environment need to be considered in relation to different groups of disabled people and needs. Schools should consider asking parents through Admissions' Forms about their own access requirements.

See Appendix 1 for advice on funding streams.

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled people of information that is provided in writing for people who are not disabled

Information might include:

- handouts, timetables, worksheets, notices, information about school events, newsletters, posters;
- improving the delivery of information might include making information available: in Braille, in large print, in simplified language, on audio-tape, on video-tape, through sign language, using a symbol system (e.g. Widgit).

It reduces repeated efforts at a later stage if a consideration of different formats is built into the design of information produced for pupils, staff, parents etc. Schools should consider asking parents through Admissions' Forms about information needs and preferences e.g. a parent with a visual impairment may prefer to receive all letters and newsletters electronically by email so they can enlarge documents or use their own software to access material, others may prefer an enlarged hard copy.

In respect of more specialised formats, for example, Braille, British Sign Language, help is available from DISCS.

3. Making it happen

3A: Management, coordination and implementation

The Scheme should show:

- how the governing body takes responsibility for the Scheme and the School's Accessibility Plan, sets a clear direction for it and reports on it annually;
- how and when the Scheme will be reviewed and revised, including how anyone might contribute to that process;
- a mechanism for the evaluation of the Scheme;
- the variety of evidence that will be used in the evaluation of the Scheme.

The Scheme needs to include an Action Plan showing future plans. It is strongly recommended that the School combines this with the statutory Accessibility Plan. It may well be possible to cut and paste relevant sections from other related plans e.g.

- school improvement plan;
- professional development / staff training plan;
- asset management plan;
- health and safety action plan;

It is important that the plan:

- allocates lead responsibilities;
- sets out clear timescales;
- identifies the necessary resources, human and financial and source of funding, e.g. school development grant; Schools Access Initiative; devolved capital budget; delegated budget;
- makes clear what the anticipated outcomes are, with performance criteria where necessary;

- builds in review mechanisms and dates.

3B: Getting hold of the school's plan

The school makes its accessibility plan available in the following ways:

The school might consider:

- how it makes the plan available;
- whether the plan is available on the school website;
- making the plan available in different formats;
- ensuring the plan is readable. The school may need to consider: jargon/acronyms; typeface/font size; how easy it is to find your way around.

Appendix 1 : Advice on Funding Streams

Funding for improvements to the physical environment of the school may come from a variety of different sources:

- School Access Initiative funding may be needed for major capital works. This has to be coordinated with the local authority's priorities;
- devolved formula capital funding can meet the costs of some of the priorities;
- delegated funding can be used to meet the costs of particular equipment that may need to be provided for disabled pupils;
- where alterations need to be made to improve access for a disabled member of staff, funding may be available through 'Access to Work' (Department of Work and Pensions). Access to Work pays a grant towards any extra employment costs that result from a person's disability, e.g. specialist equipment and adaptations, signing support etc. For people who are starting a paid job with you, the grant is up to 100% of the approved costs. For those who already work for you, the grant is up to 80% of the approved costs over the first £300.

There are some principles that can help to keep down the costs of separate work to improve access:

- access considerations can often be "piggy-backed" on to other work to be done, for example: there is a small marginal cost for installing visual alarms when the school is being re-wired, there is an even smaller cost in improving colour contrast when the school is being re-decorated;
- purchasing policies can take account of access requirements, for example: the purchase of an adjustable height science bench when benches are purchased, or a number of calculators with large keys when calculators are being purchased;
- seeking advice can be a good investment but advice needs to be broadly based and take account of different groups of pupils;
- creative ideas may come at low cost or no cost.