

**Policy Title: Disability Equality Scheme Policy**

**Mortimer**



**Leader: Mr S Hignett**

**Review Date: July 2024**

# Disability Equality Scheme

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**Review Date**

**Senior Member of Staff Responsible**

**Designated Members of Staff**

**Governor Responsible**

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# Disability Equality Scheme

## 1. Disability Equality Scheme Overview

The school is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its employees, pupils and any others involved in the school community, with any form of disability and will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices and service delivery.

This school will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment, and will also consider pupils who are carers of disabled parents, in line with the schools equal opportunity/equality and diversity policy.

The Disability Amendment Act 2012 requires all public authorities, including schools, to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme. A Scheme is basically a strategy and action plan as to how your school are going to promote disability equality and eliminate discrimination.

This new law requires organisations across the public sector (including hospitals, local and central government, schools and colleges) to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly. It is all about including equality for disabled people, into the culture of public authorities in practical and demonstrated ways.

The basic requirement for Mortimer Community College when carrying out its functions is to have due regard to do the following:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

The Disability Equality Scheme must include a statement of:

- How disabled people were involved in the Scheme's development
- Methods for impact assessment
- Action plan to fulfil the general duty
- Arrangements for gathering information on employment, education delivery and its functions
- Arrangements for putting information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of the action plan and in preparing subsequent Disability Equality Schemes
- Within three years of the Scheme being published, take the steps set out in its action plan and put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of information
- Publish an annual report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of its information gathering and the use to which it has put the information.

**Implementation:** Once the scheme is written and approved it will need to be published. The core of the work is taking forward the actions, improving the performance through the school's outcomes of impact assessments, building up the information base about performance on disability equality, integrating it into school plans and actually improving and changing things for disabled people.

The Scheme and Action Plan need to be reviewed **every 3 years** and an progress report published annually.

Recommended Actions:

- To ensure that the Disability Equality Scheme is approved by the governing board and that it is reviewed annually and a progress report published
- To ensure that schools collect and report on employment, promotion and training data for disabled staff
- To ensure that schools collect and report on attainment, exclusion, admissions and transition data for disabled pupils
- In partnership with the head teacher and senior leadership team identify ways in which the school can identify and address gaps
- Review and consider areas that have an impact on diversity in the workforce e.g. recruitment procedures, and let the LA know if training and/or support is required
- Ensure that Disability Impact Assessments are carried out on all Policies, Procedures and Practices, both new and existing.

### **1.1 What do we understand by “disability”?**

“Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”, (DDA 1995 Part 1 para. 1.1).

This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act and again in July 2012

- People with cancer or surviving cancer are now included, as are people with HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis
- For a mental impairment the need for it to be clinically well recognised has been removed.

The Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

Mortimer Community College uses the “social model” of disability, as adopted by South Tyneside Council, as the basis for its work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers

that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled (South Tyneside Council Equality & Diversity Policy).

Mortimer Community College “recognises that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in the education system and in society as a whole” The social model of disability is used throughout our work. We understand that the definition of disability under the Act is different from the eligibility criteria for special educational needs provision. This means that disabled pupils may or may not have special educational needs. Mortimer Community College that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition.

For other definitions see the Disability Rights Commission website or the SEN Code of Practice.

## **2. The General Duty**

We will actively seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons –This means not representing people in a demeaning way, and it also means not pretending they don’t exist and not representing them anywhere at all
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life -It is also important to respect the wishes of disabled children in an educational setting so that they do not feel pushed into activities they do not wish to take part in
- take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

## **3. How we will meet the General Duty & Specific Duty**

The production of this disability equality scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life and demonstrates how we are seeking to meet the specific duty i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

Actions are taken to increase access to the curriculum, the physical environment and the provision of information, including measures to increase participation such as: directly asking pupils with a disability to be on the student council; advocacy support to help pupils with

school participation. Mortimer Community College ensures that children with disabilities can participate in lunchtime activities, school plays or school trips.

### **3.1 Involvement of Disabled People in Developing the Scheme**

Disabled pupils, staff, parents and disabled members of the community are involved in developing the scheme. The school records need to show all students with SEN and/or a disability and any actions taken to involve pupils, including outcomes that have been achieved e.g. results of questionnaires, feedback from individual pupils and parents/carers etc.

### **3.2 Developing a voice for disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers**

Pupils and parents/carers are engaged in mentor sessions, review meetings, transition planning, etc. The school encourages disabled pupils, staff and parents/carers to participate in consultation and debate.

### **3.3 The Governing Body**

The governing body consults with parents/carers and supports disabled parents/carers and community members proposals to become governors.

### **3.4 Removing barriers**

Mortimer Community College will endeavour to remove physical, curriculum and information (communications) barriers to promote disability equality. In line with the Children and Families Act 2014 arrangements are in place regarding school admissions to ensure that students with medical conditions are fully supported.

### **3.5 Disability in the Curriculum, including teaching and learning**

Developing positive attitudes etc.

### **3.6 Eliminating harassment and bullying**

Refer to schools anti bullying policy - ensure latter is clear in how discrimination, bullying, harassment of disabled children and adults will be dealt with.

### **3.7 Reasonable Adjustments**

How effective are reasonable adjustments and how do you measure their effectiveness? e.g. teaching and learning breaks, lunchtime, after school clubs and trips (out of school activities).

### **3.8 School Facility Lettings**

Use by the community and parents etc (e.g. more disabled parking if letting for a function-part 3 of DDA)

### **3.9 Contractors & Procurement**

Are contractors employing disabled people? Is there training available to contracted staff on disability awareness? - are they aware of disability issues, including harassment and bullying particularly if in contact with pupils/staff?, (consider re:- catering/school staff are they aware who has food allergies (wheat, sugar etc) do they promote disability?

### **3.10 Information, Performance and Evidence**

#### **a. Pupil Achievement**

Information collected on pupils based on special educational needs categories will not necessarily capture all those pupils who are disabled. Pupil achievement will also be tracked through Facility Data Capture windows, external assessment and mentor feedback

#### **b. Learning Opportunities**

Inclusive educational opportunities will be made available to disabled students, like all other students, through advice, guidance, student and parent consultation.

#### **c. Social Relationships**

The school will promote social relationships between disabled pupils and also nondisabled pupils.

#### **d. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff**

Training needs and priorities of the school regarding the DES will be based on assessment outcomes. External expertise will be used as appropriate.

### **3.11 Assessment**

Assessments are carried out. This comprises two parts: a test of relevance and the actual assessment.

The test of relevance is the initial screening stage of the process. The school lists all functions and policies, then determine which have implications for disability equality issues. Functions and policies rated as high relevance are assessed first.

All functions and policies are tested for relevance every three years. New policies are tested as they arise.

Assessments use a mixture of existing evidence and new consultation to base their findings on. If serious grounds for concern are evidenced, then appropriate changes will be made to the way a function or policy is delivered.

A rolling programme will be developed to complete assessments on all functions, and policies.

Methods used include feedback from pupils with a disability and also their parents and/or carers. Outcomes are also measured, such as the increase in participation of pupils with a disability in out of school activities.

### **3.12 Review**

The scheme must be reviewed each year and revised at least every three years.

**Senior Member of Staff Responsible:** Senior Lead Teacher for SEND

**Designated Member of Staff:** Senior Lead Teacher for SEND

**Governor Responsible:** Steve Coldwell