

Disability Equality Scheme in Schools

A Self-Evaluation Resource

School:	Ponteland Community Middle School
Local authority:	Northumberland
Date of review:	April 2012
Participants:	Headteacher

Background

The Disability Equality Duty of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 places on all public authorities (including schools) a general duty, when carrying out their functions, to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA 1995;
- 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.

In addition to the general duty, regulations made under Part 5A of the DDA 2005 set out a specific duty on certain public authorities, including all publicly funded schools, requiring them to demonstrate how they are meeting the general duty.

Definition of disability

The DDA 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'. The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, and long-term conditions such as cancer and HIV. These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long term, as defined above.

Duties on schools

Schools **must**:

- prepare and publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES);
- involve disabled people in the development of the scheme;
- implement the scheme;
- report on the scheme.

Schools are already required to plan to improve the accessibility of their schools for their disabled pupils under the planning duties contained in Part 4 of the DDA. Schools may wish to publish a single document that contains both their access plan and DES, or a separate plan and scheme, according to what will work best for them on an individual basis. However the school chooses to present this information, the DES and the main elements of the Disability Equality Duty need to be distinct, easily identifiable, and in one place.

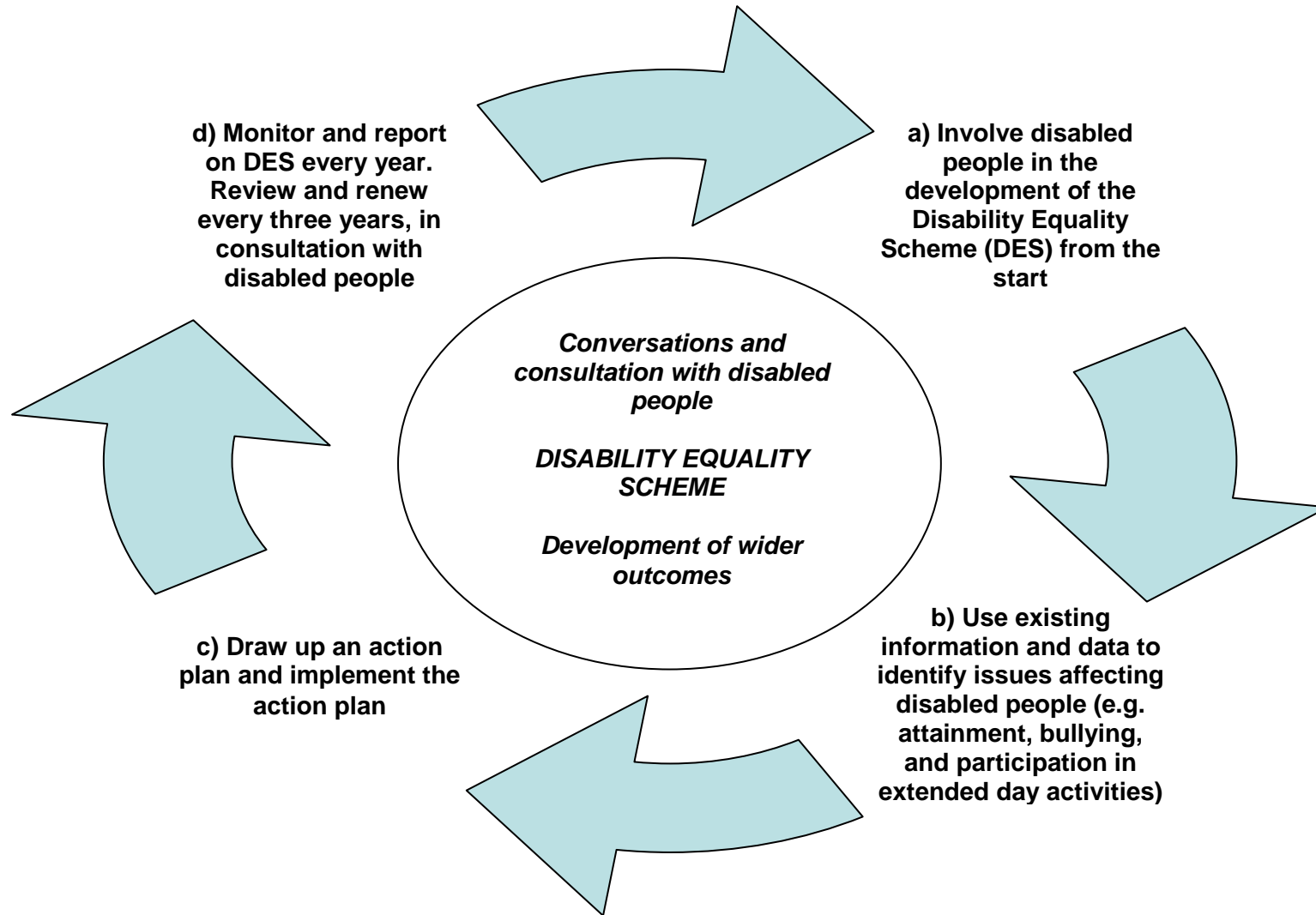
In meeting the accessibility requirements, schools **must** show how they will improve access for disabled pupils by:

- increasing access to the curriculum;
- making improvements to the physical environment of the school to increase access;
- making written information accessible to pupils in a range of different ways.

The self-evaluation resource

This self-evaluation resource is designed to enable schools and others to evaluate, using evidence, the extent to which their DES meets these requirements, and to record any necessary actions.

Disability Equality Scheme – the Cycle of Improvement



1. From the start

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
1.1 In the development of its scheme, the school must involve disabled people (pupils, staff and parents) who appear to have an interest in the way it carries out its function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEN pupils • Governors • Parents • Headteacher 	

2. Next steps

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
2.1 The school's scheme shows how the school aims to meet its duty to promote disability equality for disabled pupils, staff and parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Statement 	
2.2 The DES describes how the school has involved disabled people (pupils, staff, and parents) in the preparation of the scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per 1.1 – newsletter; working party; personal invitation. 	

5 of 10 The National Strategies

Disability Equality Scheme in Schools – A Self-Evaluation Resource

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
<p>2.3 The school's scheme sets out its arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the school's policies on:</p> <p>a) the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees;</p> <p>b) the educational opportunities available to, and the achievements of, disabled pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter invitation for parents for working party. Also personal invitation to meet with Headteacher. • As per Staffing Committee of Governing Body • Sportsability Events • Multi Skills Clubs 	
<p>2.4 The scheme clearly shows how the school assesses the impact of its current policies and practices on disability equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported annually • Reviewed every three years 	

3. The DES clearly identifies the main priorities for the school’s scheme, with actions in relation to the following.

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
3.1 The steps the school is going to take to meet the general duty (the action plan).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signage • Disabled toilet • Preparation for disabled pupils in feeder first schools. 	
3.2 The recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing Committee of Governing Body 	
3.3 The educational opportunities available to, and the achievements of, disabled pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA Support • Sportsability Events • Multi Skills Clubs • Personalised Learning 	

7 of 10 The National Strategies
Disability Equality Scheme in Schools – A Self-Evaluation Resource

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
3.4 The steps the school is going to take to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people, and eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying of disabled people.	Dissemination of Single Equality Statement within School Prospectus and Staff Handbook.	
Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
3.5 Monitoring data on attendance, exclusion and bullying by disability.	LC responds to any data. 'Open Door' policy for parents to speak with staff.	
3.6 The Accessibility Plan includes details of plans to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase access to the curriculum; • make improvements to the physical environment of the school; • make written information available to pupils in a range of different ways. 	Sports Ability Multi Skills TA support where possible. Maps for new Y5 pupils.	

4. Making it happen

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
4.1 The scheme is published, is accessible on request, and can be provided in different formats, such as on the school website or in the school prospectus.	Single Equality Scheme mentioned in newsletter and prospectus	
4.2 The Accessibility Plan is published as a stand-alone document or as part of the school's DES.	Part of Single Equality Scheme and reviewed by Premises Committee	
4.3 The school is actively implementing the actions in its scheme over three years.	Premises Committee Minutes and HTs Report Within reason and finances permitting	

5. Reporting, reviewing and revising

Requirement	Evidence	Comments/Actions
5.1 The school reports on its DES every year.	Governing Body minutes Headteacher's Report	
5.2 The school has plans to review and revise its DES every three years.	Headteacher's Report Premises Minutes	
5.3 The DES describes the arrangements for using information to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes.	Single Equalities Policy	

Further help and information

Where your DES does not 'tick all the boxes', you can get further advice, guidance and information from a range of materials, including:

- DCSF guidance – visit www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/disability/
- National Strategies – visit www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies - [Disability equality schemes and schools: A duty under the Disability Discrimination Act \(DDA\) 2005](#)
- Disability Rights Commission (2006), *Schools and the Disability Equality Duty in England and Wales – Guidance for Governors, Headteachers, teaching and support staff working in schools in England and Wales*. This is available at: http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/DRC/PDF/Schools_guidance_england_and_wales.pdf

Finally, your local authority can provide advice and guidance about all aspects of developing and implementing your scheme.