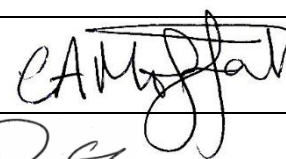





Disability Equality Scheme

DOCUMENT DETAILS	
Category:	Educational Policy
Approved By:	Local Governance Committee
Version:	3
Status:	Approved
Issue Date:	19/10/2021
Next Review Date:	19/10/2022
Signed:	Headteacher 
	Chair of Governors 

Contents

Introduction	2
PART A – DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME	2
1. Policy Statement	2
2. Aims	2
3. Roles and Responsibilities	3
4. Development of the Scheme and Plan	3
5. Implementation	4
6. Disability Code of Practice	4
7. Arrangements for Collecting Information	6
8. Publication	6
9. Monitoring and Review	6
APPENDIX A: Reasonable Adjustments for Employment Purposes	7
APPENDIX B: The Disability Equality Duty and the Governing Body	8
APPENDIX C: Summary of the school’s Duties Under The Equality Act 2010	9

Introduction

This policy is divided into two parts: an outline for a Disability Equality Scheme and an outline for an Accessibility Plan. This plan will be published on our website. It will also be made available on request to any current or prospective parent who requests it.

PART A – DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

1. Policy Statement

Paxman Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement. The school will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join the school community as students and staff.

“A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities” – the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 definition of disability.

The school’s Equality Policy is to ensure that there is no discrimination against any sub-group within our community. The school has been designed and/or adapted to have provision and accessibility for people with disabilities so that they may be integrated fully into school life. This includes parents¹ and members of the wider community.

The curriculum will be designed so that it may be delivered to provide flexible and equal access to all students whether they are able or have learning difficulties/physical disabilities as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment.

2. Aims

The aims of the Scheme are to ensure that

1. Equality of opportunity is promoted between disabled people and other people
2. Discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 is eliminated
3. Harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability is eliminated
4. Positive attitudes towards disabled people are promoted
5. Participation by disabled people in public life is encouraged
6. Steps are taken to meet disabled people’s needs with a focus on policy and not just the needs of individuals
7. Applications for admission from all potential students are considered in line with the published admission arrangements
8. Applications for employment are considered and assessed on the basis of the applicants’ aptitudes, abilities and qualifications
9. Staff with disabilities and students with learning difficulties/disabilities have access to the appropriate support, including the delivery of written information and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the school
10. The views of individual students, staff, parents, visitors and members of the community are taken into account:
 - as this Scheme is prepared and reviewed
 - at all times when their requirements are being assessed
11. All students are fully integrated into the school and individual needs are assessed and supported as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment
12. Staff working with people with disabilities, either as colleagues or as students, have appropriate information, support and training
13. The school takes steps to enable staff and students who become disabled during their time at the school to continue in their chosen career or course of study as far as is practicable
14. Members of the public with disabilities can fully participate in public events held within the school
15. The school’s premises are accessible and safe for people with disabilities, so far as is reasonably practicable and

¹ Throughout this Scheme the term “parents” means all those having parental responsibility for a child

16. No student or staff member with disabilities is treated less favourably as a result of her/his disability

3. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the **Governance Committee** to establish the policy on Disability Equality, to approve an Accessibility Plan and to monitor the effects of the Scheme and Plan.

It is the responsibility of the **Headteacher** to ensure that:

1. Disabled staff, students and users of the school are not disadvantaged because of their disabilities
2. Consultations on the development and implementation of the Accessibility Plan will involve interested individuals and groups
3. All breaches of good practice are addressed promptly, using informal procedures where possible but implementing formal procedures where necessary

It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with, comply with and implement the Scheme and the Plan in accordance with professional standards.

4. Development of the Scheme and Plan

The school will make best use of available expertise (disabled students, their parents, specialist teachers, local voluntary organisations and others) to help to identify practices and arrangements that act as a barrier to including disabled students; the local authority will also be consulted to provide advice and information.

The Scheme and the associated Accessibility Plan will be informed by students, staff and parents with learning difficulties/disabilities. Their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication of the Scheme and Plan and the arrangements for the review and reporting on the Scheme and Plan. They will help to identify the priorities, how these priorities should be met in the Action Plans and how the school should assess its progress.

It is intended that such involvement should:

1. Provide insights into the barriers faced by students, staff and parents with learning difficulties/disabilities
2. Use expertise to identify ways to overcome these barriers and
3. Improve working relationships between the school's Governing Body and students, staff and parents with learning difficulties/disabilities

The involvement of disabled people in drawing up this Scheme, including the means of its communication will include the following:

1. Consulting with parents via meetings, including meeting with the SEN Governor, the school newsletter and questionnaires
2. Consulting with students via tutorials, school council meetings and questionnaires
3. Staff questionnaire to identify understanding of disability and accessibility

Information will be gathered by:

1. SENDCO
2. Leadership Group
3. Head of Facilities

The information will influence the Scheme as follows:

Analysis of the information gathered will enable the school to identify the areas of the curriculum which present difficulties for students with learning difficulties/disabilities and whether the physical environment of the school hampers access to the whole life of the school and try to make adjustments accordingly.

The school will consider how priorities identified in its Accessibility Plan fit in with other priorities that the school has to address.

5. Implementation

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are made aware of this Policy and that the Disability Code of Practice set out below is followed.

The Headteacher and Governance Committee will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is implemented.

6. Disability Code of Practice

Environment

1. The school will plan improvements to the physical environment of the premises and physical aids to access education
2. Any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities
3. The school will take a strategic approach to planning for increased disability access; this might include linking accessibility projects to all other capital building work where appropriate
4. The school will consider, where appropriate, accessibility in all purchasing decisions
5. Evacuation procedures and escape routes will be carefully planned and published for students and staff with disabilities and those who have disabilities who are users of the premises.

Students

1. Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all students. An applicant's learning difficulty/disability will not prevent her/him from being offered a place and being integrated into the school unless:
 - the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the student would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it
 - the school would be unable to provide suitably trained staff or facilities to allow the student's needs and the requirements of the curriculum to be met
 - admitting the student would be seriously detrimental to the learning of other students in the school.
2. The school will aim to provide students with learning difficulties/disabilities the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated. The school will not treat a student with learning difficulties/disabilities less favourably than any other student and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration of students with learning difficulties/disabilities.
3. As far as resources allow, the needs of the students with learning difficulties/disabilities will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a student with learning difficulties/disabilities cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.
4. The school will make written information available to disabled students in an appropriate format. The information normally provided by the school to its students will be made available to students with learning difficulties/disabilities, taking account of students' disabilities, students' and parents' preferred formats and be made available within a reasonable time frame.
5. Students with learning difficulties/disabilities or who become disabled whilst studying at the school will be given appropriate support from staff to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the SENDCO and a Student Development Plan (SDP) drawn up, which will be reviewed a minimum of twice per year.
6. The curriculum covers not only teaching and learning but the wider curriculum of the school such as participation in after school clubs, leisure, sporting and cultural activities or school visits. Curriculum access will be considered at a "whole school" level as many barriers to access to the curriculum will be similar for many groups of students and it is helpful to take a strategic approach to removing those barriers.
7. The school recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable students with learning difficulties/disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such students to

perform to the best of their ability by meeting their individual needs. For example, the school will liaise with the relevant examination boards in such instances. Students and parents will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENDCO in liaison with specific curriculum area managers and the school's Examinations Officer.

Staff

1. In gathering information on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees, the school will include all those working at the school in whatever capacity, including those who are working under contract.
2. The school's policies on phased return to work after sickness, sick leave and monitoring may be relevant for disabled staff and reference should be made to the Sickness Absence Policy.
3. Wherever practicable, the school will:
 - consider and seek to employ people with disabilities in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with the Equality Act 2010
 - ensure that employees with disabilities are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications
 - ensure that employees with disabilities are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed-term contracts is being considered.

Members of staff who become disabled should continue, so far as is practicable and dependant on their ability to carry out the duties of their post, to be employed by the school at the discretion of the Headteacher and Governing Body. Help from related professional organisations should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status or financial loss.

The school will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in post. Options might include:

- continuing in the same post
- a gradual return to work
- a reduction in hours
- redeployment

In certain circumstances it might be necessary to consider:

- premature retirement on grounds of incapacity
- termination of employment

In cases where a disability is a degenerative or a progressive condition, careful consideration would be given to the selection of the most appropriate option (s).

The school will make reasonable changes to work practices and where possible within the workplace, to enable people with disabilities including those members of staff who become disabled whilst employed, to work successfully.

The school will ensure that a programme of training is offered to staff to increase the awareness of students with learning difficulties/disabilities and inform them of appropriate action to be taken when delivering the curriculum. Student Development Assistants will support teaching staff as required to help ensure that students with learning difficulties/disabilities have equal access to the curriculum.

People being provided with goods, facilities and services, including non-educational services:

The school will make adjustments for a disabled parent, carer, Governor or other person using the school by:

- Altering policies, practices and procedures where necessary – e.g. allowing guide dogs into the school
- Providing auxiliary aids and services – e.g. providing a sign language interpreter for a deaf parent attending a parents' evening
- Removing or altering physical features – e.g. providing a loop system to improve the acoustics for people with hearing impairments
- Providing a reasonable alternative method, or the manner in which it provides a service – e.g. meeting with a disabled parent in a downstairs room

7. Arrangements for Collecting Information

1. The school will promote the breadth of the definition of disability and of the people who are likely to be included in this definition
2. The school will gather and analyse information on:
 - The effect on the school's policies on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
 - The educational opportunities available to and the achievements of, disabled students
 - The arrangements for using information to support the review of the Action Plan and to inform subsequent schemes by means of:
 - i. Analysis of recruitment data and retention data
 - ii. Analysis of student achievement
 - iii. Student progress meetings
 - iv. SDP Reviews
3. The school will:
 - Explain why information is needed
 - Reassure students, staff and parents about confidentiality
 - Ensure that the ethos of the school is conducive to disclosure
4. The school will seek to collect information on other disabled people using its facilities and services, to show how it is promoting disability equality for disabled people

8. Publication

This Scheme together with the Accessibility Plan is available for anyone asking for a copy and will be published on the school website. The school is prepared to provide its plans in alternative formats.

9. Monitoring and Review

1. The school will adopt a planned approach, over the lifetime of the Scheme, to assessing the impact of its current policies on disability equality. As the school develops its approach, assessing the impact of policies on disability equality will become part of the school's approach to the review and development of all policies. As new policies are developed, their impact on disability equality will be assessed from the outset
2. The school will provide information on its Accessibility Plans to meet any requirements of its funding agreement
3. In the annual report on its Accessibility Plan the school will report on the progress it has made on its Action Plan and the effect of what it has done.
4. The school will review and revise its Scheme and Plan every three years. The school will make the following arrangements to use information to support the review of the Action Plan and to inform subsequent Schemes:
 - Termly meetings to review the scheme/plan including feedback from stakeholders
5. As part of this Scheme, the school will:
 - Revisit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the Scheme and
 - Re-examine the information to see if the actions taken have affected opportunities and outcomes for disabled students, staff and parents
6. The review of the Scheme will inform its revision including how the school sets new priorities and new Action Plans for the next Scheme. This process will again:
 - Involve disabled students, staff and parents and
 - Be based on information that the school has gathered
7. The school will review and align its Disability Equality Scheme and its Accessibility Plan so that it produces a new Scheme and Plan at the same time.
8. The SENDCO and Site Manager will report on the Scheme and Plan to the Headteacher as appropriate.
9. The Headteacher will report to Governors on any relevant aspects of the working of the Scheme and Plan as appropriate.
10. Appendix B sets out some questions which may help the Governing Body to fulfil its disability equality duty.
11. The Governing Body will review the policy every three years.

APPENDIX A: Reasonable Adjustments for Employment Purposes

These adjustments may include:

- Adaptions to premises
- Re-allocating some duties
- Altering hours
- Finding alternative accommodation/changing the person's place of work
- Rehabilitation, assessment or treatment leave
- Examining the duties to see where additional support may be required Training
- Modifying equipment
- Modifying instructions or manuals
- Modifying assessment or testing procedures
- Providing a reader or interpreter
- Providing supervision
- Transferring the person to fill an existing vacancy

APPENDIX B: The Disability Equality Duty and the Governance Committee

(Questions the Governing Body may want to ask itself as the “responsible body” for the school)

Duties to disabled student, staff and parents			
Does the Governance Committee receive regular reports on how the school is meeting its duties to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ disabled students? ➤ disabled staff? ➤ disabled parents, carers, governors and to other disabled people who use the school or may want to? 			
Disability Equality Duty: General Duty			
Does the Governance Committee have regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ promote equality of opportunity for disabled people? ➤ eliminate disability discrimination? ➤ eliminate disability-related harassment? ➤ 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? 			
Disability Equality Duty: Specific Duty			
Does the school have a Disability Equality Scheme?			
Did the school involve disabled people (students, staff and parents) in the development of the Scheme			
Does the school’s Scheme show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ how disabled people have been involved? ➤ how information is gathered on the effect of the school’s policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruitment and retention of disabled staff? - Opportunities for and achievements of disabled students? ➤ how the school assesses the impact of its policies, current or proposed, on disability equality? ➤ the steps it is going to take to meet the general duty (the school’s Accessibility Plan)? ➤ how information will be used to support the review of the Accessibility Plan and to inform subsequent Schemes? 			
Did the school implement the actions in its Scheme within three years of the previous review of the Scheme?			
Does the Governance Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ report on its Scheme annually? ➤ review and revise its Scheme every three years? 			

APPENDIX C: Summary of the school's Duties Under The Equality Act 2010

This applies to three main school functions:

- To the school in its main function of providing education to students
- To the school as an employer
- To the school as a provider of services to parents and carers and the wider public

The employment and service provision duties have applied to schools since 1996 when the DDA was first implemented and subsequently amended by successive versions of the Act, most recently by the Equality Act 2010. The education duties were taken from the SEN and Disability Act 2001. The Disability Equality Duty applies across the other main functions covered by the DDA/EA.

The Disability Equality Duty:

The Duty requires the school to take a more proactive, more explicit, more involved and more comprehensive approach to promoting disability equality and eliminating discrimination.

More Proactive

The school needs to move from a focus on an individual response to an approach that builds disability equality considerations in from the start and at every level of the school: at strategic, policy, management and classroom level.

More Explicit

The school has to be able to demonstrate what it has done and what it plans to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for disabled students, staff, parents and other users of the school.

More Involved

The school has to involve disabled students, staff, parents and others in the development of its Scheme. Disabled people need to be involved from the very start and their involvement needs to inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of the Scheme.

For detailed information on the Equality Act 2010 go to: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010