

Maple Infants' School

Accessibility Plan and Disability Equality Scheme



3-year period covered by the plan: March 2009 – March 2012

Introduction

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 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 plan sets out the proposals 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.*

Guidance from the DfES states that a person has a disability if he or she has a long term (i.e. lasting at least 12 months) physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Substantial, as defined by the DDA, is something that is more than minor or trivial. The definition of disability is a wide one and includes those with medical needs (e.g. cancer, diabetes) and a large number of pupils with learning difficulties and emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.

It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Attached is a set of action plans showing how our school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

At Maple Infants' School we are committed to the removal of barriers to the progress of disabled pupils. We aim to give all children full access to the curriculum at school and to be able to participate fully in school life. We are also aware of, and try to ensure equal treatment of, all other stakeholders such as parents, employees and others involved in our school community, with a form of disability. We always endeavour that disabled stakeholders are not treated less favourably in any procedures, practices or service delivery.

Our commitment to equal opportunities is driven by the National Curriculum Inclusion statement.

The school:

- sets suitable learning challenges
- responds to pupils' diverse needs
- overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

The school's policies on Bullying and PHSE promote equality and respect for all regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or impairment.

This Access Plan underpins the LEA's Strategy 'Increasing Access & Creating Capacity' (Autumn 2007) for planning to improve access at a local level, by committing the school to a programme of actions, evaluation and review which will improve access to the curriculum for pupils with special needs and disabilities. This plan also operates alongside the school's SEN policy.

1B: Information from pupil data and school audit

Maple Infants' School is a two form entry infant school (with 52 place Nursery class) with 262 children on roll. (From September 2008 we have made provision for an additional Reception Class to accommodate pupils who were unsuccessful in getting school places in the local area.) We currently have pupils with identified disabilities including Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Dyspraxia and Speech & Language difficulties on roll. Two children currently have a Statement of Special Educational Need and provision is adapted when necessary to enable them to participate fully in school life.

We are mindful of the adults in our school community. We have several members of staff (4 known) who under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act have an identified disability and are aware of a few parents (3 known) who also meet this definition. We are committed to improving access for all these individuals and others who may have similar needs in the future. Parents are encouraged to inform the school of any disabilities or barriers they may have to school accessibility (be it physical access or, for example, difficulty with reading school literature) through the school admission form and process. No other users of the school facilities (lettings) have notified us of a disability. Though small, our car park can provide parking for disabled staff, parents or visitors as necessary.

We have forged strong links with our local special school, Bedelsford, and pupils and their teaching assistants visit frequently throughout the year to share in play and learning experiences. Full access is given to these pupils who have complex disabilities and needs.

1C: Views of those involved during the development of the plan

SEN Governor
Premises Governor
Parent of Disabled Child
Disabled Member of Staff

2. The main priorities in the school's plan

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.

Maple Infants' School believes that it is the right of all children to be included in their education. We believe that this right extends to everyone associated or connected with our school. To this end we will endeavour to make our school and its facilities accessible to all. This we will do within our resources and in conjunction with the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Local Authority.

We believe that inclusive education is the right of every child and that an inclusive environment is one that promotes a child's sense of belonging and makes education an enjoyable and fulfilling experience socially, emotionally and academically. We do not believe that children and young people are inclusive members of our community of schools simply because they attend a mainstream school.

To this end, it is a priority for us to show commitment to challenge attitudes about disability and accessibility and to develop a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion.

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

At present we make extra provisions for disabled pupils to enhance their access to the curriculum through the following ways:

- Visual prompts and resources including visual timetables are used to facilitate access for the 2 statemented pupils.
- Use of Makaton to enhance 2 way communications between adults and pupils.
- Special provision is made at lunchtime to enable 2 children to eat in a quieter area with a Learning Support Assistant.

Through Assemblies, PHSE and SEAL, disability awareness is promoted in the curriculum.

Staff working with pupils with disabilities receive appropriate training, with the following courses attended most recently:

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|--|----------------|----------------------------------|
| • Making Sense of Autism | October 2007 | 3 members of staff |
| • Speech & Language Difficulties | October 2008 | 2 members of staff |
| • Setting Up & Running Social Communication Groups | November 2007 | 1 member of staff |
| • Developing Social Communication Groups | February 2008 | 2 members of staff |
| • Autism & Behaviour | January 2008 | 1 member of staff] |
| • Each Child is Unique | November 2008 | 2 members of staff |
| • Inclusion Development Program | September 2008 | 1 member of staff |
| • Dyslexia Awareness INSET | September 2008 | All teachers/teaching assistants |

Our governors also receive appropriate training:

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|--|--------------|-------------|
| • Governor's Update on SEN | January 2009 | 3 Governors |
| • How Governor's can make Every Child Matter | March 2008 | 1 Governor |

Other associated training, which includes disability issues, has included:

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|---|---------------|-------------------|
| • Antibullying Guidance | November 2008 | 1 member of staff |
| • SEAL Conference | March 2008 | 1 member of staff |
| • Impact of Parental Mental Illness on Children | March 2008 | 1 member of staff |

Our School Improvement Plan focuses on the 5 outcomes in 'Every Child Matters' underlining our commitment to equal access and opportunities for all children.

Thorough risk assessments are undertaken as required and take full account of the needs of disabled children e.g. A named adult will provide 1 to 1 support as necessary.

Effective target setting and thorough monitoring of progress is in place for all children and high expectations are maintained for all, regardless of attainment or ability.

Future Developments

- Considered purchase and provision of laptops for individual pupils.
- Wider use of prepared visual aids, prompts and resources designed to support access to the curriculum on offer.
- Disability equality issues to be incorporated into the planning and learning in Citizenship, PHSE and RE curriculum.
- Promote positive images of artists/sports personalities or those with sporting talents who have disabilities so disability is seen as no barrier to achievement e.g. David Weir, especially in light of the upcoming Paralympics in 2012.
- Consider OT assessment of classrooms as necessary to ensure needs of pupils with sensory difficulties and Dyspraxia are met (e.g. desk height, posture on chair, lights).
- Staff working with children with disabilities receive appropriate training and support to enhance children's access to the curriculum, develop their independence and promote social interaction.
- Ensure that modifications and risk assessments are made which enable all children with disabilities to take a full and active part in extra curricular activities and school trips (destinations and providers to be checked for 'disability friendliness').
- In future building programs from 2009, ensure careful consideration is made for access and provision for disabled pupils, members of staff and visitors e.g. wide doorways, corridors, signage, lighting, toilet facilities etc.

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

At present, with the exception of a shallow Nursery step to the outside area, where assistance is required, the school is accessible to children with disabilities at our school. We do not currently have disabled toilet facilities for staff and visitors, but this is planned for in future building works.

Time-tabled sessions in quiet areas are available to disabled children during the school day to provide them with a retreat from the main classroom whilst still providing them with full access to the curriculum.

Future Developments

- Provision of a permanent designated quiet/sensory area for pupils with disabilities and for other children with a need.
- Ensure all corridors and classrooms, especially doorways, are accessible for frames and wheelchairs.
- Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all pupils.
- Consider the purchase of a movable ramp for the Nursery step (although alternative disabled access routes are available).
- Ensure that door furniture is easy to use i.e. height of door handle, and that doors are clearly and uniquely marked for differentiation between rooms.
- Ensure that the door width is adequate to accommodate a wheel chair.
- Ensure that the corridors are maintained wide enough for traffic flow, with little clutter hindering movement.
- Ensure that routes to the playgrounds are kept clear.
- Improved showering/changing facilities for disabled pupils.
- Purchase playground equipment suitable for use by physically challenged, HI or VI children as necessary.
- Check suitability of lunchtime tables for child wheelchair user as necessary.
- Upgrade staff toilet facilities to incorporate disabled toilet and shower.

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

Most of the signs around Maple Infants' School are in a visual format, with some also in Braille. Visual timetables in the classrooms show the plan of the day in pictorial or photographic format.

There is the facility to enlarge school documents as necessary for pupils and parents.

Our school has received advice on strategies to ensure access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities for children with learning difficulties from relevant professionals, e.g. Educational Psychologist, Support for Learning team, Speech & Language Therapist. (Some children with disabilities may have dyslexic type difficulties).

Future Developments

- When reviewing curriculum policies take account of developments which may improve access to the curriculum for children with learning difficulties.

- School to inform itself as necessary of services available for visually and hearing impaired children and children with Down's syndrome and other disabilities.
- Explore new pictorial signage for the school environment.
- Make information available in different formats as necessary e.g. Enlarging print for the visually impaired, simplifying language, using picture symbol language for children with communication difficulties e.g. PECS

3. Making it happen

This plan has been written for resourcing, implementation and review over the three year period of March 2009 – March 2012. We will review the plan yearly and publish it on the school website. The plan will also be made available in the school foyer.

3A: Management, coordination and implementation

Overall responsibility for our accessibility plan lies with the governing body, but improving access for disabled pupils requires everyone at the school to understand the duties in the DDA and apply this knowledge in their own area of responsibility: the Head Teacher and senior leadership team, learning support and teaching assistants, class and subject teachers, dinner staff, the SENCO, caretaker, administrative staff and governors themselves.

Lead Responsibilities

Head Teacher:	Over arching responsibility on a day to day basis, dovetailed with the school improvement plan. To promote the school's vision and values for disabled pupils.
INCO:	To make links between SEN and disability wherever necessary.
Assistant Head Teachers:	Planning CPD opportunities relating to disability awareness and issues.
Governing Body:	To monitor and review the plan's implementation for assurance of progress and contribution to school life.

1): Promoting equality

Target	Action	Resources	Time scale	Outcomes
<p>Greater participation in the life of the school</p>	<p>Publishing an accessible summary version of the plan</p> <p>Ensuring recruitment practices (including governors) include/target disabled people</p> <p>Disabled pupils making full use of extra curricular activities available.</p>	<p>Website. Hard copy in school foyer.</p> <p>LA HR support as necessary.</p> <p>Possible adult support.</p>	<p>Ongoing with yearly reviews.</p>	<p>Disability equality awareness increased.</p> <p>Staff/governors make up reflects society.</p> <p>Disabled pupils engaged in the wider aspects of the school curriculum. Parental satisfaction.</p>

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

Target	Action	Resources	Time scale	Outcomes
Greater participation in the school curriculum	Possible provision of laptop & typing programme for individual pupils	School budget	By March 2012	Children able to write more effectively and confidently and self-esteem is raised
	Further training of key staff in the use of visual aids & prompts	SEN training budget	By July 2010	Children have fuller & more independent access to curriculum
Disability equality issues are incorporated into teaching of PHSE, SEAL & RE	Training for all staff on Disability awareness and it's incorporation into the curriculum_	Purchase of positive resources	By July 2010	Target is met
Resources, Policies and Schemes of Work meet the needs of children with disabilities	Subject co-ordinators and SENCO check these documents for disability awareness and seek advice as necessary	Allocated time	During the review cycle and by July 2010	All policies and Schemes of Work provide for children on roll with disabilities, as far as possible.
Disabled pupils are specifically supported at lunchtime	Appropriate adult identified to support child and/or run lunchtime nurture group as necessary	Matrix and school budget	By March 2012	Disabled pupils are less anxious and calmer and learn social interaction and play skills
Risk Assessments enable children with disabilities full access as far as possible	External advice sought as necessary including from OT service to audit classroom	Allocated time for SENCO as necessary	As appropriate	Target met
School Improvement Plan responds to needs of children with disabilities	When revised, SIP emphasises that objectives relate to all children regardless of their disability	Allocated time for SMT	During the review cycle and by July 2010	Target met

2): **Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services: (2B)**

Target	Action	Resources	Time scale	Outcomes
Physical Environment of school is improved to increase access for disabled members of the school community	Provision of a permanent quiet area for children with disabilities and others with a need	School budget	By March 2012	Children are calmer and less anxious and access curriculum and other aspects of school more effectively
	Corridors and classrooms are accessible to frame or wheelchair users, by maintaining a clutter free environment	LA or school budget	As necessary	Children and other members of school community have fuller & more independent access to school
	Door widths can accommodate a wheelchair – main school door	LA or school budget (Inc. in any future building projects from 2009)	By March 2010	Target is met
	Disabled toilet facilities and shower installed	LA or school budget (Inc. in any future building projects from 2009)	By March 2010	Target is met
	Purchase playground equipment suitable for use by physically challenged, HI or VI children as necessary.	School budget	As necessary	Disabled children have access to appropriate equipment
	Check suitability of lunchtime tables for child wheelchair user as necessary	School budget	As necessary	Disabled children have access to the lunch tables

3): Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled: (2C)

Targets	Action	Resources	Timescale	Outcomes
School to inform itself if necessary of services available for visually and hearing impaired children and children with Down's Syndrome and other disabilities	SENCO to consult with relevant professionals for advice as necessary	Allocated time	When necessary	School will have necessary knowledge to support children with these needs if necessary
Explore new pictorial signage for the school environment	SENCO to review current signage and discuss with SLT improvements that can be made	Allocated time and school budget	When necessary	School will have appropriate pictorial signage to aid communication around the premises
Make information available in different formats as necessary e.g. Enlarging print for the visually impaired, simplifying language, using picture symbol language for children with communication difficulties e.g. PECS	SENCO to assist staff in presenting information in different formats to meet pupils needs	Allocated time and school budget	When necessary	Pupils can access information in a suitable format to meet their needs

3B: Access to the plan

This plan will be made available on the school website and in the school foyer in order to provoke feedback, a vital element in the review and development of the plan. The governors will evaluate progress of the plan yearly via the school website and hard copy in the school foyer.

This plan was approved by the governors on

Signed:

..... Chair of Governors

..... Head Teacher

Date of Access Plan:

Date of review:

Senior member of staff responsible: