

Accessibility Plan

(Revised September 2019)

1. Purpose of this Policy

At Darton Academy we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the range of activities offered by the school.

We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in, and visit our community.

2. The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 to cover education. Since September 2002 the school's AAB has had three key duties towards disabled students under Part 4 of the DDA, which are:

- Not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled students to ensure that they are not at a substantial disadvantage, and
- To plan to increase access to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information.

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 has extended the definition of disability to include people with a hearing or visual impairment, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autistic spectrum disorder, Down's Syndrome and hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, diabetes, cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, sickle cell anemia and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included. If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, those who have recovered from cancer, or people with a history of mental illness), then they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

3. The Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 2005 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard to the following when carrying out their functions as employers, as providers of education and associated services and as providers of services to the wider community:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminating harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled persons
- Taking steps to take account of disabled persons disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than their non-disabled peers

This general duty is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED). A specific duty under the 2005 legislation requires all schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and an associated action plan covering a three year cycle.

4. Unlawful Discrimination

Darton Academy will ensure that discrimination is avoided in:

- the selection, appointment and promotion arrangements for staff;
- staff conditions of service;
- staff training;
- the arrangements for determining student admission;
- the terms on which admission is offered;
- refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an admission application;
- provision of education or associated services (including educational visits, extra-curricular activities and youth service activities);
- exclusions;

5. Students

Darton Academy fully supports the vision of Barnsley Children's Services namely:

- We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future.
- Inclusion is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.

Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled students and young people, while bearing in mind the interests of other students and young people. The Academy is required to make under the terms of SENDA 2001;

- Improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled students and young people;
- Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra – curricular activities);
- Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled students and young people
- There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not students with behavioural issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following can be underlying reasons for poor behaviour; mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy.

- The school will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled students in the school.

(N.B. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act).

6. Students - Education and Associated Services

The Academy will examine each individual case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate every individual's needs.

The Academy aims to fulfill the requirements of the legislation to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students and young people with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the school premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

All relevant information is recorded on the individual's record (staff or learner).

A review will be held at least annually as part of the annual Performance Management programme in the case of staff, or as part of the whole school review process and the annual special needs review in the case of students.

Risk assessments will be carried out on behalf of disabled staff, students and visitors on an annual basis, and as circumstances change.

These risk assessments will be the responsibility of;

- the line manager in the case of a new member of staff
- the Learning Manager with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or delegated staff member as appropriate for students
- the member of staff that the visitor has come to see/working with.

7. Action on Transfer into the School

At transfer to Darton Academy, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled students and their families to ensure that the learner's educational needs and the Academy's requirements are fully understood by staff, parents/carers, and learner, and to ensure that there is a smooth transition.

8. Achievements of Disabled Students

Records are kept of all students' achievements including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability. Any individual feedback from students, parents or carers regarding specific actions are recorded on the learner's file. Achievements of all students are valued at Darton Academy whether they are of an academic, social or spiritual value (see Appendix D).

9. Educational Opportunities available to Disabled Students

- Alternative provision to access all areas of curriculum teaching will be put in place if a learner is physically unable to go to class.
- We will endeavour to ensure that all students have equal access to educational visits/trips.

- All students have the right to attend all trips and residential visits. This will be achieved through careful consultation with parents/carers, planning, funding and adequate staffing of visits.
- In all teaching and learning activities a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no learner is excluded from learning.
- Additional careers guidance will be offered in order that the disabled learner has the same opportunity to access careers advice.
- We will also refer to specialist Children's Services Careers advisors where the learner has additional needs.
- Access arrangements will allow equal access to examinations, so that students can fulfil their potential.
- Students will be entered for the level of examination which is appropriate for their level of ability.

10. Sensory Support for Students

- The Academy will make provision to enable students with sensory support needs to access the full curriculum, for instance by providing documents in alternative formats, and by considering classroom seating and accommodation arrangements.

11. Parents with Disabilities

- The Academy will meet the needs of parents and carers with disabilities wherever possible, for instance by providing documentation in alternative formats if requested.
- Parents' Evenings will be held in the Atrium and Lecture Theatre. Access to all floors is also possible and parent/carers are provided with the lift code on all Parents' Evenings.

12. Involvement of people with additional needs in developing the policy

As we look to develop the Disability Equality Policy, we will continue to consult with:

- The parents/carers of disabled students who would like to come to Darton Academy, to identify particular needs and to ensure that, where possible, these are met;
- The students themselves to ensure that all of their needs are being met;
- Barnsley Council in order to ensure that as facilities are developed they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act;
- The Health and Safety Executive in order to ensure that any modification of the buildings does not contravene legislation to protect any students, staff, or visitors to the Academy.

We will continue to use these mechanisms for consultation in the future but will also seek to widen the spectrum of those consulted, specifically:

- Through encouraging disabled students to have representation on the School Council.
- Through setting up a focus group to collect and collate the views of disabled members of our community.

13. Recruitment, Development and Retention of Disabled Employees

Recruitment of Staff

The school follows Barnsley Council procedures in the recruitment of teaching and support staff to ensure equality of opportunity.

The application form used specifically requests disclosure of disability, information which is then recorded within the academy on appointment. This is used to inform suitable provision for the successful applicant.

Development of staff

The school will analyse the information in respect of disabled staff:

- in teaching, teaching support, administrative support and site support roles;
- at all levels of seniority in the school;
- as permanent or temporary members of staff, full-time or part-time or casual staff;
- in training and professional development opportunities
- in disciplinary and capability procedures;
- in harassment and bullying procedures;
- as contract staff for example: contract cleaners and agency supply teachers;
- among those who take sick leave
- among those leaving the profession early

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a request; often these discussions occur on an informal basis, but these can be formalised on request.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff. Other appropriate adjustments may be made as agreed between the member of staff, their Line Manager and the Senior Leadership Team.

The school values the wellbeing of all members of staff. Darton Academy can access the support and services from the Occupational Health services for all members of staff at the academy.

Support will be provided to enable disabled staff to return to work or continue in service and will also be analysed at annual review.

Retention of staff

Each member of staff leaving the academy will be invited to complete an exit survey evaluating the extent to which the academy has met their needs and whether it is a disabled friendly place to work which encourages diversity in its workplace.

We will continue to collate data and evidence and to liaise with the Local Authority around the collection of information to ensure that policies and practices meet the legal responsibilities of the Disability Equality Duty.

14. School Facility Lettings

Darton Academy makes facilities and resources available on a lettings basis to all members of the community. There is a managed system of hiring facilities and only buildings with 100% DDA access are available to hirers.

15. Contractors and Procurement

Contractors and procurements from Barnsley Council's approved lists are covered by the County Council's Disability Equality Scheme.

16. Discrimination in Admissions

The Advisory Academy Board (AAB) ensures that disabled students are not discriminated against:

- through the criteria determined for admission to the school, or
- by refusing an application from a disabled person for admission to the school, based on their disability

17. Off-site Activities

Darton Academy will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that students and staff with disabilities are given access to off-site activities organised by the Academy. This responsibility lies with the member of staff responsible for Educational Visits.

18. Eliminating Harassment and Bullying

Darton Academy strives to achieve a positive, encouraging atmosphere conducive to nurturing positive attitudes towards all people with disability of any sort.

Should incidents of bullying/harassment occur they will be dealt with in line with the sanctions set out in the Care, Support, Guidance in Behaviour Policy.

Details of bullying incidents are recorded and categorised as being racist, sexist, homophobic or based on a student's additional needs.

The AAB will take positive action against any employees, learner or other person (visitors/volunteers) who are involved in the harassment of another employee, learner or other person. All members of the Academy community i.e. employees, students or others have a duty not to harass others on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognized by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Principal (or in the case of harassment by the Principal, to the Chair of the AAB).

19. Membership of the Advisory Academy Board (AAB)

All nominations received to become a member of the AAB of Darton Academy are treated equally. Disabled representatives are welcome and proceedings are made accessible. Parent Governors are available to parents and their contact details may be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors.

20. Liaison with Parents

The governors will make available to parents/carers information relating to:

- the Accessibility Policy;
- how the Academy helps students with disability gain access to the curriculum; what the academy does to ensure fair treatment for disabled students.

Darton Academy will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all students with disability through the provision of designated staff e.g. SENCO, Assistant Principal for Behaviour and Safety, appropriate Learning Support Assistants, Learning Managers and Form Tutors.

Wherever possible, information for home will be provided in different formats if requested.

21. Training

Appropriate training for staff, students and young people to further understanding and implementation of the DDA and SENDA will be provided. Staff working with students with individual needs will have access to suitable and relevant training as necessary.

22. Responsibilities

AAB Responsibilities

The AAB ensuring that disabled people are not treated less favourably in the following aspects as relevant:

- accessibility to the premises and facilities;
- accessibility to the curriculum;
- accessibility of associated educational services;
- training of staff and the education of students

The AAB will:

- oversee the implementation of all the school's policies and practices including
- the area of Disability, Equality and Inclusion;
- review what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made;
- consider the school's Accessibility Policy; and
- review the Policy annually.

The AAB is also responsible for the appointment of a SENCO link governor. The link governor covers SEN provision, and has additional responsibilities in overseeing the implementation, review and monitoring, and future development of this Policy.

Principal Responsibilities

The Principal will:

- along with the AAB ensure the implementation of the Scheme
- report progress as required to the AAB
- ensure that the Accessibility Plan has been reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to the AAB;
- ensure that regular liaison with parents/carers of students with additional needs takes place.

Senior Leadership Team Responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team will positively promote and implement the policy and support specific staff with responsibility for various aspects of the policy.

SENCO Responsibilities

- To provide access to regular relevant training opportunities and updates
- To include DDA issues in the induction programme
- Undertake SEN annual reviews and reporting, in addition to on-going and regular monitoring

Staff with responsibilities (e.g. Heads of Department/Year)

- Implementation of the policy / scheme and reporting, recording as appropriate.
- Staff development within their area

Teaching and Support Staff Responsibilities

- Familiarity with the policy / scheme and assist in its implementation
- Undertake training as relevant

Expectations of Students

- To treat disabled people as favourably as others, and to and apply the academy code of conduct at all times.

23. Accessibility Policy

Our Accessibility Plan follows the local authority's guidelines and aims to:

- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the Academy in order to enable disabled students to take advantage of education and associated services;
- enable disabled staff to have reasonable access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable the needs of disabled visitors to the site are taken into account.

24. Impact Assessment

The Assistant Principal (Behaviour & Safety) is responsible for monitoring the impact of the policy and Accessibility Plan, and reporting to the Governors on an annual basis.

25. Reviewing/Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed and monitored by the School Leadership Team and Governors annually.

Review date: November 2021

Appendix A: Key Legislation

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995,
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Appendix B: Associated Policies and other documents

- Fischer Family Trust data
- Procedure for Complaints
- RAISEonline Full Report
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Appendix C: Parental Points of Contact

- The first point of contact is the learner's **Form Tutor and/or the SENCO**.
- Consultation may continue through the **Pastoral Team and the Head of Year**, and then with the **Assistant Principal (Behaviour & Safety)**