



Keelman's Way School

Disability Equality Scheme

School Ethos, Vision and Values

Keelman's Way 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.

Our school will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment and will also consider pupils who are carers of disabled parents.

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:

- 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 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.

This school uses the social model of disability throughout our work and 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. We recognise that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition.

Schools Strategic Priorities

As a school we are charged with meeting the identified needs of children and young people who experience severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties. We aim for our pupils to be fully accepted and valued members of the community and will continue to do this through our use of community facilities, libraries, sports facilities,

theatres, leisure facilities, public transport and links with a range of local schools etc. in an effort to educate the wider community about the many positive qualities of our pupils. In turn our pupils benefit from a range of rich learning opportunities that encourage them to develop/extend invaluable life skills e.g. learning to travel with reduced levels of support, participating in activities not available within school (e.g. swimming, multi-gym, theatre, accessing facilities in other schools) and encouraging appropriate behaviour in public.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The ethos of Keelman's Way School is such that differences are accepted and celebrated. Children do ask about differences e.g. colour of skin, physical abilities and the use of specialist resources (glasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs etc) not with negative attitudes but with a wish to better understand their world and the needs of their peers.

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
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life. It is 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 or that they have no control or ability to exert influence/control
- Take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons e.g. our staff deployment strategy ensures a higher staffing ratio for those with higher level needs

(DDA 2005 S.49A)

How we meet the General Duty and 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 demonstrated how we are seeking to meet the specific duty i.e. to produce a Disability Equality Scheme for our school.

- Ensuring access to learning. Personalising learning through individual expectations. All pupils have: specific IEPs, subject targets reflecting known attainment and access to a curriculum that has been appropriately modified further enhanced by teacher differentiation
- Adopting a holistic approach to our offer to pupils by incorporating therapeutic approaches recommended by our multi-disciplinary colleagues e.g. ensuring

that pupils are well positioned through their school day. For some pupils this will be straight forward as ensuring that the classroom is well lit, well resourced, safe and well staffed by knowledgeable staff whilst others it may involve the use of specialist positional resources, delivery of programmes devised by Physiotherapist, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Community Nurses or Clinical Psychologists.

- Providing private areas for highly dependent pupils to have personal needs met e.g. specialised feeding, personal attention/care
- Adaptations to the physical environment. The physical environment of the school is subject to ongoing review to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils as well as possible e.g. adaptations to create a disabled toilet, creating additional learning spaces.
- Access to information: through non-verbal strategies, by controlling the level of language used, signing to support understanding and through the written format – using symbols.
- Increasing participation: we have established an active student council that have been consulted by a range of outside bodies; rearranging home school transport to enable pupils to attend after school clubs and offering an holistic curriculum that addresses the personal, social, educational and physical needs of our pupils
- We ensure that all of our pupils have opportunities to participate in:
 - Lunchtime activities most suited to their specific needs with specific play areas allocated. Staff are deployed according to the needs of pupils/safe supervision
 - Schools plays/events: Everyone has a role to play no matter how big or how small. For some pupils large group events can be distressing and in which case staff use their professional judgement about when to withdraw a child to a quieter location and when/if to return,
 - Educational visits: If a pupil is timetabled to be in a specific lesson that involves a visit they participate. This may involve the school in identifying additional adults to ensure safe supervision along maximum engagement.
 - After school and holiday activities will be available during which time they can enjoy recreational activities with their friends.

(See: "Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings" which can be ordered online at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications Ref:- DfES 01602006)

The staff at Keelman's Way School recognise the range of barriers and discrimination faced by our pupils with a disability and consistently give more than "that bit extra" to tackle obstacles and break down barriers. They ensure that all pupils are included by facilitating access to a rich range of opportunities, supporting pupils in speaking up for themselves whenever possible or if necessary speaking on their behalf.

Developing a voice for disabled pupils:

- There is a well-established school council that provides pupils with opportunities to be consulted and express their views about school based matters and wider community issues.

- Older/more able pupils are involved in the setting and review of their targets
- More able pupils are encouraged to contribute their views to their Annual Reviews
- From Y9 all pupils are planning for their post school options through detailed 'transition planning' This involves pupils, parents, social care and health, Services for Young People, Physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists – all those involved with a pupil plus potential providers

Developing a voice for disabled staff:

- All staff, disabled/non-disabled, are able to contribute their views, ideas and suggestions in the knowledge that they will be accepted with courtesy and respect. During 'difficult' times some staff feel more comfortable in expressing their concerns to individual members of the SMT in the knowledge that their 'problem' will be handled sensitively. This is a strength of the school that would transfer to disabled colleagues.
- The general duty identified within section two applies to staff as well as pupils

Developing a voice for disabled parents/carers:

- All parents are encouraged to fully participate in all aspects of the life of the school and when needed actions are taken to facilitate this e.g. by providing translators for parents whose first language is not English, including signing.
- All parents are encouraged to attend and contribute their views to their child's annual review. A report forms is circulated previous to the meeting or parents may wish to offer a verbal contribution at the meeting.
- All parents are consulted about how well they feel the school is at meeting the needs of our pupils through a parental questionnaire – areas highlighted are incorporated into the school development plan.
- There is very good parent representation on the Governing Body able to undertake the monitoring of both the scheme and the action plan.
- All parents who chose to participate have been enabled to express their views/concerns effectively to other parties e.g. the provision SALT, Physio and Education.

The Governing Body

- Parents and the Governing Body: There are three places on the Governing Body of Keelman's Way School allocated to parents – there are no vacancies. All parents are made aware that they can volunteer to stand for election via leaflets provided by Governors Admin Section.
- Awareness of the contribution of the Governing Body to the life of the school:
- A full list of school governors is included into the school brochure along with their roles and responsibilities.
- Consultations with parents/carers: Periodically governors request that the Head Teacher formally seeks the views of parents/carers by asking that they complete a questionnaire. Parents are able to contact governors via

the school or Governors Admin, Town Hall and Civic Officer, South Shields to discuss matters of concern to them.

- Disability is not a barrier to a parent or member of the local community becoming a governor of Keelman's Way School.

Removing barriers. Keelman's Way School has taken extensive steps to ensure that the school is accessible to pupils, parents, staff, governors and other visitors to our school. To date we have addressed:

- The culture of the school
- Attitudes and Values
- Staff and staff responsibilities
- The community of the school and beyond
- The school council
- Student participation and recognition
- Staff participation and recognition (including staff development/performance management)
- Access – both curricular and physical

Disability in the curriculum; The curriculum delivered to the pupils attending Keelman's Way School has been extensively adapted to enable our pupils to fully access learning most appropriate to their needs, age and stage of development in addition to the extended curriculum. This has been done by:

- A range of communication strategies are employed across the school in order to understand and enable purposeful communication e.g. intensive interaction, objects of reference, Makaton signs/symbols, PECs, single switches, Techspeaks etc.
- We work closely with Speech and Language Therapists to improve communication skills by supporting programmes and enabling input SALT targets are incorporated into IEPs.
- The curriculum has been adapted to enable access by all pupils (see Curriculum Framework document).
- Learning expectations, differentiated in line with individual levels of ability, are based on known individual levels of attainment to ensure that all can contribute positively to lessons and have confidence to contribute to make progress – all 'can do' differently.
- Visits linked with topic delivery are accessed by all pupils within any class – disability is not a barrier to these enriching experiences.
- Less able/younger pupils require high levels of staff support, older/more able pupils are able to communicate their needs, wishes, choices, information with minimal staff intervention.
- Post 16 students edit the Keelman's Way Gazette making decisions relating to its style and presentation. This provides us with a very accessible tool to share information with parents and the wider community. In addition to pictures it uses the conventional written word as well as symbols to support reading.
- Pupils from across all classes have frequent opportunities to represent the school via sporting and enterprise events etc.

Eliminating harassment and bullying: We at Keelman's Way School aim to create a safe environment where all members of our school community can feel secure, valued and respected.

It is the aim of Keelman's Way School:

- To promote a secure and happy environment, free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy on personal and social development.
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership that help to maintain a bully-free environment.
- To ensure that everyone at Keelman's Way School is aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve these aims.
- To ensure that pupils are able to transfer their learning to the wider community.

Reasonable Adjustments: Every consideration is to how pupils can be supported to make best use of the teaching, learning and social education delivered by school.

- Pupil attendance is closely monitored by Head Teacher and Services for Young People to ensure that all pupils have maximum opportunities to benefit from teaching and learning offered.
- Staff are deployed throughout the school to ensure that pupils have appropriate and differentiated levels of support to access a relevant curriculum (staff deployment strategy)
- The curriculum is enriched by the incorporation of educational visits associated with the curriculum to promote interest and engagement.
- KS4 and Post 16 student work closely with Services for Young People and post school providers to enable students and their parents make informed choices about what they will do when they leave school.
- A high percentage of pupils choose to attend after school clubs, holiday clubs and residential visits.

Signed.....
Head Teacher

Date.....

Signed.....
Chair of Governors

Date.....

Completed Spring 2016
Review Spring 2018