Disability Equality Policy

November 2017

Introduction
Berlesduna Academy Trust welcomes its general responsibilities under the new Disability Equality Duty to have due regard of the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other people

This Scheme sets out the steps the governing body will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life.

We will set up a representative steering group which will include at least one disabled person to develop and monitor the scheme. This will consist of:

SEN Governor
Inclusion Manager
Parent(s) Representative
Year 5 or 6 Pupil with disability
School Council Member
PSHE Co-ordinator
Staff representative

School Ethos, Vision and Values
At Berlesduna Academy Trust we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against disabled pupils.
The achievement of disabled pupils will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.

Our school uses the 'social model' of disability (attached) as the basis for its work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled.

Definition of Disability
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 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'.

According to the Disability Discrimination Act impairment is to be treated as affecting the person's ability to carry our normal day-to-day activities only if it affects one or more of the following:

Mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, considerable difficulties with memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand and perception of the risk of physical danger.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 has extended the definition of disability to include people with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer from the point of diagnosis. Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is 'clinically well-recognised', although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Most pupils with SEN statements and those with long term medical needs will be treated as disabled. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

How Disabled People have been involved in the Scheme
Berlesduna Academy Trust recognises the importance of involving disabled people fully in the development of our Disability Equality Scheme. We plan to involve disabled people in the following ways:

Disabled Pupils:
We will identify our disabled pupils. We will ensure that we listen to the views of disabled children in informal settings. Issues identified by these pupils will be identified as prioritised.

Disabled Staff:
We will ask all staff to identify any barriers that affect them and how we can plan to overcome them and they will be added to our policy and identify the school's priorities in our action plan.

Disabled parents/carers:
We will give all existing parents/carers a questionnaire to identify any barriers and then ask them how we can improve the way we meet their needs and will include this in the admissions questionnaire of parents for children on entry. We will record key issues identified by parents/carers and prioritise them in our action plan.

Disabled members of the local community:
We will give a questionnaire to all groups which make use of our facilities, asking them to identify any barriers and suggest reasonable adjustments. We will record key issues identified by these groups and prioritise in our action plan.

How we will gather information on the effect of our policies and practices on disabled people.
We recognise that our policies and practices may impact on disabled people and in particular on:

- The recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
- On the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled pupils.

We acknowledge that information gathered from a wide range of sources will be required in order to identify the actions which we need to take to promote disability equality. We will ensure that information is gathered in relation to both employment and the delivery of our services. The processes we use for gathering information will include:

Pupil Achievement:
Raise on line, Target Tracker and teacher assessment will be used to track the progress of all pupils including those with disabilities. The progress of pupils who are on the SEN register and who have disabilities will be reviewed using SEN review and target setting procedures.

Learning Opportunities:
We will continue to use Essex Action/Action+ and Statement reviews to set targets for pupils with SEN. We will investigate additional support and opportunities available for disabled pupils.

Admissions, Transitions and Exclusions:
Exclusions will be monitored to investigate whether this included disabled pupils. Liaison between parents and previous educational settings will take place before admission where possible. Parents can also highlight concerns on admission questionnaire given to parents of all pupils. Liaison will also take place with the receiving schools at transition and when any pupil leaves the school.

Social Relationships:
Informal monitoring of social relationships of disabled pupils will take place, particularly those with social/communication difficulties. This will include observations in a variety of situations. Disabled pupils will be given the opportunity to discuss successes and difficulties at formal reviews. Pupils will also be included in social skills group where necessary.

Employing, Promoting and Training Disabled Staff:
Our school has adopted the LA recommended policy for employing disabled staff. Monitoring and training of disabled staff will be equal to that of non-disabled staff.

How we will assess the impact of our policies?
- SEN reviews will highlight progress of disabled pupils with SEN and enable us to highlight additional difficulties and assess impact of existing arrangements.
- The views of disabled pupils who are not on the SEN register will be sought.
- Feedback from parents/carers of disabled pupils will be sought.
- Assess the participation of pupils with disabilities in out of school activities/clubs and social events.

We recognise that all our school's policies may have an impact on the participation and outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the local community. We have agreed a programme to review the impact of policies and this is contained in our action plan.
When governors review policies the impact on disabled members of the community will be considered.

Our Action Plan
We have produced a Disability Equality Action Plan to ensure that we fulfil our general and specific duties under the Disability Equality Duty. Our Accessibility Plan will be maintained as a separate document and we will ensure that the actions in the plan fit in with the actions and arrangements in our Disability Equality Scheme. As other policies are reviewed by governors, disability equality will be included in relevant policies.

Reporting
We will report annually about the progress we make on promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people. Our annual reports in the Newsletter and website will include details of:

- Information we have gathered during the year.
- How this information was used
- Action points completed during the year and those that are ongoing
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We will ensure that disabled people are involved in this process.

Revisiting the Scheme

Our scheme will be reviewed and revised after a period of 3 years and disabled people will be involved in the process. A new action plan will be produced, responding to issues identified through our impact assessment and including in our annual reports.

The Social Model

LACK OF USEFUL EDUCATION DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT
INACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT   SEGREGATED SERVICES

DE-VALUING   POVERTY

PREJUDICE   THE STRUCTURES WITHIN   BELIEF IN THE MEDICAL
                                   SOCIETY ARE THE PROBLEM   MODEL

                        INACCESSIBLE   INACCESSIBLE
                        TRANSPORT   INFORMATION

DISABLED PEOPLE AS ACTIVE FIGHTERS FOR EQUALITY
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALLIES

SOCIAL MODEL THINKING
Child is valued
Strengths and needs defined by self and others
Identify barriers and develop solutions
Outcome based programme designed
Resources are made available to ordinary services
Training for parents and professionals
Relationships nurtured
Diversity welcomed and child is included
Society evolves

Social Model

Impairment and chronic illness exist and they sometimes pose real difficulties for us. The Disability Movement comprises those disabled people and their supporters who understand that they are, regardless of their particular impairment, subjected to a common oppression by the non-disabled world. We are of the view that the position of disabled people and the discrimination against us are socially created. This has little to do with our impairments. As a disabled person you are often made to feel it's your own fault that you are different. The difference is that some part, or parts, of your body or mind are limited in their functioning. This is impairment. THIS DOES NOT MAKE YOU ANY LESS OF A HUMAN BEING. But most people have not been brought up to accept us as we are. Through fear, ignorance and prejudice, barriers and discriminatory practices develop which disable us. The understanding of this process of disablement allows disabled people to feel good about ourselves and empowers us to fight for our human rights.

The Disabled People's Movement believes the 'cure' to the problem of disability lies in the restructuring of society. Unlike medically based 'cures', which focus on the individual and their impairment, this is an achievable goal and to the benefit of everyone. This approach referred to as the 'social model' suggests that disabled people's individual and collective disadvantage is due to a complex form of institutional discrimination as fundamental to our society as sexism, racism or heterosexist.

The obsession with finding medically based cures distracts us from looking at causes of either impairment of disablement. In a worldwide sense, most impairment are created by oppressive systems – hunger, lack of clean water, exploitation of labour, lack of safety, child abuse and wars. Clearly, this thinking has important implications for our education system, particularly with reference to primary and secondary schools. Prejudicial attitudes toward disabled people and, indeed, against all minority groups, are not inherited. They are learned through contact with the prejudice and ignorance of others. Therefore, to challenge discrimination against disabled people we must begin in our schools.

Our fight for the inclusion of all children, however 'severely' disabled, in our mainstream education system, will not make sense unless the difference between the 'social' and the 'medical' or individual model of disability is understood.

Definitions
In the last 35 years disabled people coming from a human rights' perspective have sought to make sense of their experiences of segregation, isolation and discrimination. They have put forward a new rights based approach founded on 'social model thinking' which views the barriers of environment, attitude and organisation as the cause of disabled people's unequal position in society.   The following definitions have not been adopted:

'**Impairment** is the loss of limitation of physical, mental or sensory function on a long term, or permanent basis.' (Disabled People's International 1981)
'**Disablement** is the loss of limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers.' (Disabled People's International 1981)
'**Disabled People**' include people with: physical impairments; sensory impairments (deaf people, blind people); chronic illness or health issues including HIV and AIDS; and all degrees of learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural problems.   It also includes people with hidden impairments such as epilepsy, diabetes, sickle cell anaemia; specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, speech and language impairments; children labelled as 'delicate'; people who identify as 'disfigured'; people of diminutive stature and people with mental distress.   All are excluded by barriers though not all have impairments.

BERLESDUNA ACADEMY TRUST DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

TARGET	ACTION NEEDED	RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)	TIME SCALE	AVAILABLE RESOURCES	MEASURABLE IMPACT	ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION
Regularly update pupil, staff and parent disabilities and priorities key issues they raise	Staff questionnaire. Identify pupils from SEN register. Parent questionnaire given to all parents when pupil enters school	Inclusion Manager		Questionnaires Disability register	Clear picture of individual needs	Create database and consider needs of individuals
Continue work of representative steering group	DE Working Party- to meet termly	Inclusion Manager		Agenda Representative reports	Highlight disability issues in community/curriculum	Minutes of meetings
Continue to review resources for PSHE re: disability	Purchase/collect of resources required	PSHE /Library co-ordinators		Books/dvds Internet Articles	High quality PSHE lessons. Positive attitudes towards disability stakeholders	Observations of relevant PSHE lessons. Stakeholders' attitudes
Identify positive disability role models in local community	Letter to school community. Contact secondary schools, sports clubs etc.	DE Working party		Letters	Visits to assemblies. PSHE lessons of positive role models.	Records/review of visits
Organise 'Awareness Weeks' twice yearly to focus on a particular disability	Decide focus and organise whole school activities	Inclusion manager/PSHE co-ordinator		Whole school and class activities	Increased awareness of school community	Examples of work Stakeholder comments ICT presentations