



BOHUNT EDUCATION TRUST ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

MODEL FOR MEMBER SCHOOLS

Duties under Part 5a of the Disability Discrimination Act require the member school's Responsible Body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: students, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to;
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how they will meet these duties

The SEN and Disability Act (2001) extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. Since September 2002, the responsible Body of the school has had three key duties towards disabled students, under Part 4 of the DDA:

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and/or staff, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled students

This scheme sets out the proposals of the Responsible Body of the member school to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the member school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the member school to increase the extent to which disabled students and/or staff can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled

It is a requirement that the member school's Accessibility Plan is resourced, implemented, reviewed and revised as necessary and reported on annually.

1.1: The purpose and direction of the school's scheme: vision and values

Bohunt Education Trust schools are fully inclusive, with three key values set out in its aims – ‘Enjoy’, ‘Respect’ and “Achieve”.

The member school acknowledges the fact that reasonable adjustments for disabled students, staff and parents/carers are essential to support students in achieving these outcomes. As one part of its commitment to equal opportunities, Bohunt Education Trust has focused on thinking ahead and anticipating barriers that disabled students may face and working to remove or minimise them. We are driven by the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement and strive to:

- set suitable learning challenges;
- respond to students’ diverse needs.

All staff working in a member school (teaching and non-teaching staff) must be aware of the duties owed to disabled students, parents and colleagues. All staff will therefore be equipped to implement the duties across all areas of the school:

- all teachers in their classrooms;
- all Learning Support Assistants supporting students;
- any responsible adults on school trips or extra-curricular activities;
- all staff at break/lunch;
- all staff when dealing with disabled parents/carers;
- all managers with curricular, pastoral and staffing responsibilities

There are six key outcomes of improving accessibility for disabled students, staff and parents (DDA 2005):

- eliminating discrimination;
- eliminating harassment (linked to a disability);
- promoting equality of opportunity;
- promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encouraging disabled students to participate fully in public life;
- schools to take account of people’s disabilities even if that may involve favourable treatment of the disabled person

Success of a member school’s Accessibility Plan should therefore be measured annually against these outcomes. However, we must also measure success in four other ways:

- Do disabled students, staff and parents/carers feel part of the life of the school?
- Are they included by peers in all parts of school life?
- Do parents feel that their child is part of the life of the school?
- Do staff feel confident in their ability to work with disabled students?

Consultation with all disabled stakeholders is an integral part of this vision. The member school will:

- Seek to establish which of its staff and parents meet the criteria of disabled (as has been done with all students);
- consult with them to gain feedback as to what reasonable adjustments can be made to increase their access to the school

1.2: Involvement of disabled students, staff and students

An understanding of the term 'disabled' as defined in the DDA is essential. The definition is broad, covering a wide range of impairments and a large number of students:

"someone with a 'physical or mental' (1) impairment which has a 'substantial' (2) and 'long-term' (3) adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

- (1) – includes sensory impairments or hidden impairments
- (2) – more than minor or trivial
- (3) – has lasted, or is likely to, more than twelve months

To establish whether a student comes under the DDA's definition of disabled, four questions must be answered:

- 1) Has the student difficulty with any of these normal day-to-day activities?
 - Mobility (getting to and from school, moving about in school, school visits)
 - Manual Dexterity (holding a pen or book, using tools in DT, playing an instrument, throwing/catching a ball)
 - Physical Coordination (washing/dressing, taking part in PE)
 - Ability to lift, carry or move objects e.g. a school bag
 - Continence
 - Speech (communicating with others, understanding others)
 - Hearing
 - Eyesight
 - Memory, concentration and understanding
 - Perception of danger (e.g. hot objects, basic road safety)
- 2) Is the difficulty caused by an underlying impairment?
- 3) Has it lasted (or is likely to) twelve months or more?
- 4) Is the effect more than minor/trivial?

If the answer to these questions is yes, the student is classed as disabled.

Other key factors must be considered:

- aside from spectacles/lenses, all medication is excluded from consideration (in other words, a student with diabetes, epilepsy or severe asthma is classed as disabled because, without medication, normal day-to-day activities would be affected);
- conditions such as dyslexia, autism, attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) are classed as disabilities if the four key questions are answered in the affirmative;
- a broken limb is not classed as a disability because it will clearly be healed within the twelve months;
- severe disfigurement is classified as a disability (proof of normal day-to-day activities being affected are not necessary);

- progressive conditions (likely to change/develop over time) are classed as a disability the moment that the ability to carry out normal activities is affected e.g. myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME);
- certain conditions such as cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis are classed as disabilities on diagnosis and before normal day-to-day activities are affected
- serious behavioural/emotional difficulties caused by medical conditions could be classified as a disability;
- however, serious behavioural/emotional difficulties caused by social/domestic circumstances do not count as a disability.

A report can be run via SIMS to give a full and comprehensive list of the current disabled students in school which is updated by the Support for Learning department regularly.

This list can include conditions such as asthma which, at the severe end, would be classed as a disability. The school should work to refine the list and get an accurate picture of the severity of conditions in order to ascertain whether the student is 'disabled'.

Staff will receive advice and guidance on students' disabilities and how they should be catered for via SfL Booklet and information on the staff shared area.

This list should be extended to include all disabled members of staff as well as parents/carers. The Personal Information form completed by all new students will include a section for parents/carers to register their disabilities in order to keep the list fully up-to-date.

Disabled staff and parents will be encouraged to contribute to the development of the scheme in several ways:

- the scheme will be available to read on the school website;
- alternative arrangements will be made for parents with visual impairments;
- any comments can be made by e-mail, post, telephone or in person to the Senior Manager responsible for overseeing the scheme

Forward planning is essential so a key target is for the school to gain a clear understanding of any needs/requirements of the next intake as soon as possible to allow for all reasonable adjustments to be applied..

It is hoped that full involvement of all disabled people will, as well as fulfilling requirements of the duty, bring real benefits in terms of:

- providing insights into the barriers faced by disabled students, staff and parents;
- expertise in identifying ways to overcome these barriers;
- improving working relationships between the school and its disabled students, staff and parents

The school will collect views from disabled stakeholders in a number of ways:

- meeting individuals and small groups in informal settings to gather feedback
- feedback on the scheme (posted on website) through parents' comments
- interviews with disabled staff members
- close collaboration with other schools to share good practice

A key action point is for the school to develop its ways of involving a representative range of views from disabled stakeholders over the three years of the scheme. This will result in a greater understanding of what works and the involvement of disabled people will improve and deepen over time.

1.3: Information gathering

Accurate collection of information is vital for the school to make decisions about improving opportunities for disabled students, staff and parents. Full understanding of the term 'disabled' (as explained in 1.2) is crucial and a key action point is to raise awareness of this definition.

- accurate information is therefore the only way that 'reasonable adjustments' can be made
- all information about disabled students, staff and parents will be stored centrally and appropriate details will be passed to relevant stakeholders in the school by the senior manager overseeing the scheme
- key personnel such as Achievement Coordinators, SENCO and the school's Welfare Officer must pass all relevant information to the senior manager overseeing the scheme

There is not a requirement for disabled people to make a disclosure though it is clearly in their interests to do so if they require reasonable adjustments to be made for them. It is therefore essential that the school explains clearly why this information is required in order to ease some people's discomfort at disclosing an impairment or health condition. People must be reassured about confidentiality.

It is also important to acknowledge that some staff will not want others to know about their health information; there are many instances when reasonable adjustments could be made without necessarily involving large numbers of staff.

Staff training and raising awareness is also vital in ensuring all staff understand the definition of disability in the DDA. For example, someone diagnosed with breast cancer may not realise this impairment is automatically covered by the DDA.

Once accurate information has been collected, it is important that the school can analyse the information in respect of staff representation:

- teachers, teaching support, administrators and governors
- different levels of management in school
- those with TLRs
- permanent/temporary, full or part time
- disciplinary/capability procedures
- absence data
- trainee teachers

- those leaving the profession early
- the school will ensure that after the collation of information on disabled staff, there will be an analysis on whether appropriate adjustments are being made to best support the member of staff
- this information is vital in cases of a member of staff returning from sick leave and/or continuing in service

The admissions process will clearly be the best starting point for the school to gather accurate information on incoming students. This will be analysed along with information on students already in the school. As with staff, the importance of phrasing requests sensitively and accurately cannot be underestimated.

Participation:

- There are currently no areas of the curriculum to which our disabled students have no access. PE is aware of those students that are affected by serious asthma or physical disabilities which may affect their participation, and act accordingly.
- Students with learning difficulties that are classified as disabilities are looked after by the Support for Learning Department (SfL) department and information about their accessing of the curriculum is provided in The Inclusion Booklet and staff training
- Disability issues are increasingly reflected as part of Bohunt Education Trust's curriculum
 - issues are raised across the school in a 'Thought for the Week', and in House and School meetings
 - disability issues are being worked into a PSE scheme followed by all students
 - students work hard for charities raising a good deal of money; information is provided about disabilities as appropriate in meetings by LG and ACs
 - at present all students with disabilities are able to engage in extra curricular activities and school trips – all necessary information is provided to event organisers and trip leaders and considered in risk assessments
 - at present all parts of the school are accessible to disabled students though of course, with the possibility of newly diagnosed impairments or new arrivals, this has to be constantly and consistently monitored
 - clear policies are in place for other issues that often affect disabled students (bullying, administration of medicines, PSE)

Achievements of disabled students:

Once there is a clear and accurate picture of which students in the school are disabled, there must be analysis of how well they are achieving.

- A key action point for the school is to analyse how our disabled students perform in:
 - exams
 - accredited learning
 - end of key stage outcomes
 - value added data
 - achievements in extra-curricular activities

Information on disabled parents/carers:

Although the school is not required, under the specific duty, to gather information on disabled parents/carers, the general duty still applies to this key group. Accurate collection of information therefore enables us to show how we are trying to promote disability equality

- the school will ask about any disability or health condition in early communications with parents/carers. This communication will explain clearly why the information helps all parties and emphasise the range of adjustments that can be made

Whilst this information is being gathered, the scheme will operate on the basis of all current available information.

1.4: Impact Assessment

Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment:

These favourable actions could include (when necessary):

- providing additional coaching or training for disabled students, staff and parents/carers

Ensure all disabled staff are aware of the duty	Senior manager to interview staff Staff to be made aware of union support		
Provide way of showing all stakeholders the scheme	Equality Objectives to be available on school website		
Ensure staff receive regular training on aspects of disability equality duty	Use of workshops for other staff Specific training each school year on students with disabilities		
Sharing vital information with all staff	Senior Manager and SENCo to ensure key information on students is shared with all staff via memos or briefings		
Combat any disability-related bullying	Revise bullying policy to ensure disability is covered appropriately PSE sessions on disability Review all bullying incidents on a termly basis track and monitor Deputy Head to intervene in cases of any allegations		
Ensure disabled students are represented in positions of responsibility	Monitor number of disabled students and involvement in student voice. Encourage disabled students to become mentors and support other students		
Ensure access to school for disabled parents/carers in new builds	Ramps in key areas Disabled toilets		
Ensure equality scheme is reviewed	Scheme to be updated whenever circumstances change Senior Manager to review the scheme annually in its three-year life		
Promoting positive attitudes towards disability	PSE units School/House Meetings Focus Days Awards		
Ensuring all disabled students have access to extra-curricular activities and trips	Clear procedures to follow when planning trips including risk assessment, staffing ratio, gender of staff and students		
Administration of medicines/first aid	Training of first-aiders Students with medical conditions to report to office; office to hold details of all medical conditions (and on SIMS)		
Clear information gathering on disabled students through transition	Application process to include information on disabled students and parents/carers		

- special facilities for disabled students at break/lunchtime
- additional arrangements for disabled parents/carers visiting the school
- adjustments to working life of disabled staff following discussions with the headteacher

3. Making it happen

3.1: Implementation

BET member schools are required to implement the actions in their scheme within three years.

The action plan outlined in Section 2 must have the oversight of the Responsible Body so that progress is checked in the termly staff and students' committee. A member of the senior leadership team has oversight of the scheme and will report to the headteacher on a regular basis. He is responsible for ensuring all details are updated whenever necessary. He will also ensure that staff are trained to understand and carry out the duty's requirements.

The equality scheme will be reviewed by the senior manager yearly throughout its three-year life.

The member school and the Responsible body will need to evaluate the effectiveness of the equality scheme and reflect this evaluation in discussions with the member school's School Improvement partners and Ofsted.

3.2: Publication

The member school is required to publish its Equality Objectives and has done so.

3.3: Reporting

BET member schools are required to report on their objectives annually. We will make clear both:

- what progress we have made in terms of implementing our action plan
- what has been the effect of what we have done

The annual report will follow the yearly review overseen by the senior manager responsible for the scheme. The views of disabled students, staff and parents/carers will help us identify progress made and actions still needed. It may be necessary to modify the action plan where necessary.

This report will be presented in through:

- Member schools' websites so that feedback from stakeholders is a constant part of the process;
- Member schools' prospectuses – it is a requirement for the member school to report on its accessibility plan in this document. It will be presented in the form of a summary, with signposting to a full report elsewhere.

3.4: Reviewing and revising the scheme

A full review is required every three years. As part of the review, we will need to revisit the information that identified the priorities of the plan. As well as forming a new action plan, we will need to evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme on affecting opportunities and outcomes for disabled students, staff and parents/carers.

Review frequency: 3 years

Review date: February 2020

Last updated: February 2017