

Bow Community Primary School Disability Equality Policy

This document is in response to the Disability Equality Duty, which requires all schools to produce a Disability Equality scheme and should be read in conjunction with the accessibility plan. It is important to consider, also, in the light of the Covid pandemic how far persistent poverty should be regarded as a disability in terms of a child's future potential to succeed in all aspects of their education. This matter was raised in the NGO online conference of 23rd November 2020.

1. Learning Community Ethos - Vision & Values

Our vision is to develop the whole school community to achieve its full potential, academically, socially, physically and emotionally. Bow Community School will strive to continually improve and provide a supportive, caring and disciplined environment, in which every individual can thrive.

Bow Community Primary School comprises a mixture of families in terms of employment and economic background. Our annual census data shows us that the children are predominately from a White British background. We have a cohort of children with Special Educational Needs and the school site is accessible for children with disabilities.

As migration and economic change alter the shape of our local and national communities, it is more important than ever that all schools play a full part in promoting community cohesion and inclusion. But community cohesion is not just about good race relations, it applies to many aspects of community life including positive relations between older and younger generations, and as Devon has an increasing older population this is an important factor.

1.1 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
- The need for mental impairment to be clinically well 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.

We 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. The school recognises that social, educational and behavioural difficulties are part of this definition.

1.2 Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities centre on achievement for all and our commitment to inclusion recognises that all people have individual needs, and barriers to learning may be varied and wide ranging. Our school improvement plan reflects the following key elements:

- to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of every pupil
- to continue to improve the physical environment of the school site so that it is accessible for the whole community
- to work with the school community to help all pupils to develop into confident and responsible young people

The obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act are entirely congruent with our commitment and ethos of offering a fully inclusive accessible and welcoming learning environment.

1.3 Strengths

Crediton School Community

- The Crediton School Community actively promotes inclusion and equality and works closely together to promote and share good practice
- There are excellent communication and transition arrangements in place within the community
- All schools within the community have policies to support inclusion
- Training needs are supported by Babcock and the local authority

Bow Community Primary School

- All pupils follow a full and balanced curriculum, appropriately differentiated to meet their needs, and are encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life These include extra-curricular activities and off site visits.
- Valuing difference is integral to the ethos of the school and supported through our PSHE and assembly programmes.
- Provision maps and accessibility plans are in place, and to show the range of resources and mechanisms in place to support pupils.
- We actively seek to establish excellent communication systems with parents/carers, pupils, outside agencies and the learning community.
- We have skilled staff and a wide range of experience in supporting children with disabilities.

2. Fulfilling Our Obligations

Since the obligations instituted by DDA 2005 S.49A and in the light of Keeping children safe in education September 2020 the Governors and staff of Bow C.P. School actively seek to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment and bullying
- promote positive attitudes, accepting and celebrating difference
- strive to provide support which encourages individuals to fully participate at an appropriate level
- to be sensitive to the needs of individuals and to be aware of the possibility and detrimental effect of humiliation
- take steps to take account of any barriers to learning or access, even where that involves treating some people more favourably than others due to their level of need.

3. The School's Accessibility Plan

This plan runs in conjunction with the School Development Plan and will be subject to appropriate revision and amendment.

3.1 The role of pupils, staff and parents/carers in the Scheme

The school regularly seeks the views of parents, pupils and staff in a variety of ways including questionnaires and meetings of the parties involved when the Headteacher /the Governors is feel that this is necessary.

3.2 The Governing Body

Governing body minutes are accessible. We will make reasonable adjustments specific to individual needs when required on request. The names and contacts for all Governors are available from the school. When a position for parent governor becomes vacant all parents are invited to stand and statutory procedures for elections are held. The literature makes it clear that all parents are welcome.

3.3 Removing Barriers

The school will endeavour to make the physical environment, the curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities and communications as accessible as possible to all pupils, parents/carers and the community and this is reflected in the accessibility plan.

The points outlined in the general duty are actively promoted through relevant policies, direct teaching, careful choice and use of teaching resources and by high standards and expectations of behaviour and attitude.

3.4 Reasonable Adjustments

The DDA requires schools to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all pupils and users of the school are able to access the same opportunities. The individual schools will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments. Not taking “reasonable steps” to avoid putting pupils at a substantial disadvantage can only be justified if there is a reason that is both material and substantial to the particular case. The school will always take the following factors into consideration:

- The need to maintain academic and other standards
- Money available
- Practicalities of making particular adjustments
- Health and safety
- Interests of all the pupils in the school

Reasonable adjustments are made on an daily basis according to need, by working collaboratively with pupils and their parents/carers. Our aim is that every child must have access to the full range of activities and experience throughout their education.

The school will be successful in making reasonable adjustments when all pupils, wherever possible, participate fully:

- in the classroom
- in the school curriculum
- in extra-curricular activities
- at all times and in all parts of the building

And when:

- all pupils feel part of the life of the school
- all pupils are included by their peers in all parts of school life
- parents/carers of all pupils feel their child is part of the life of the school
- staff feel confident and supported in working with all pupils regardless of need

3.5 School Facility Lettings Use by the community

Accessibility to the school for disabled users is suitable due the level ground nature of the school site, with its wide doors. It is important that community users have full access to appropriate areas of school wherever possible and hirers/users are asked to discuss their requirements with school staff when booking premises.

3.6 Contractors and procurement

External agencies and contractors are made aware of individual needs as appropriate e.g. catering staff are aware of individuals with food allergies.

3.7 Information, Performance and Evidence

All schools in the learning community collect data to help monitor the impact of its policies. Data collected will include information on

a. Pupil Achievement

Data will be collected in accordance with the school's assessment policy. This data is collected to monitor whether the current provision helps all children to make expected, or better than expected progress.

b. Learning Opportunities

We will closely monitor involvement in learning opportunities offered to the school community. This monitoring enables the identification and development of appropriate activities.

c. Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions

Admission is controlled by County, adhering to the appropriate national code of conduct. Children registered as disabled or with statements of SEN have preferential admission criteria.

Robust transition systems are in place to ensure the smooth transition of pupils, in particular there is good sharing of information between Bow and QEAT. QEAT teachers make visits to Bow and organise additional visits to the college as and when appropriate.

The learning community SENCOs meet regularly, organise joint training and share information and good practice. All children spend induction days in the summer term at the college. Often if they have a TA assigned to them they will accompany them.

Arrangements to support specific needs are dealt with in conjunction with the pupil, their parents/carers and any external agencies that have been involved.

SENCO/transition workers attend the annual reviews of pupils with SEN statements in years 5 and 6 in order to assist with the preparation for transition. Transition meetings are timetabled a year in advance in Year 5, for pupils with specific additional needs.

Exclusion figures are carefully analysed to ensure that all available steps were taken to support individual children.

d. Social Relationships

Weekly assemblies and many aspects of the curriculum, in particular PSHE, contribute to the ethos of tolerance and acceptance across the school. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately and resolution of the situation is always sought.

e. Employing, promoting and training disabled staff

Bow adheres to the regulation regarding recruitment (refer to Equal Opportunities policy). All staff has equal opportunities to training and this is monitored through the annual performance review process.

3.8 Impact Assessment

In assessing the impact of the school's policy and practice regarding accessibility and to inform future planning we will consider the following questions;

- What are the training needs of the school regarding "Accessibility For All"?
- Who will be involved in assessing impact?
- How will the school determine priorities?
- Does the school need external expertise?
- What external expertise is available to support the school?
- How will the assessments be shared?
- And with whom?

Assessment will be carried out through consultation with members of the school community and analysis of information from data collection, in order that areas for development can be identified.

3.9 Reviewing/Monitoring

Monitoring of this document will be on-going and will be formally evaluated annually.

Policy December 2020.