



The Poplar Adolescent Unit  
Therapeutic Education Department

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## DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY

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Accepted by the Management Committee:

Review Date

September 2023

## **Poplar Adolescent Unit (PAU)**

In adapting this policy Poplar Adolescent Unit involved relevant persons by inviting them to comment via discussion.

Under the Equality Act 2010 there is a requirement for public sector bodies, including schools, to promote equality for disabled people in every aspect of their work. Schools need to take an organisational approach to formulating policy and practices, which positively promote disability.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and Academies, and which extends to all protected characteristics – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. This combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act,
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This duty requires Poplar Adolescent Unit to adopt a proactive approach, mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions and activities. The duty does not just apply to disabled pupils; it applies to any non-educational services we provide.

The duty applies also to parents, members of staff, visitors to the school, local community members and to potential pupils of the future. Schools can implement the general duty by actively reviewing all their policies, procedures and planned access improvements to remove barriers, with a view, for example, to greater recruitment and retention of disabled staff, greater participation of disabled pupils, disabled parents and community members.

### **Commitment to Disability Equality**

At PAU we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school who have disabilities.

We recognise and welcome the proactive nature of the duty to promote disability equality and 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. We will make

reasonable adjustments to make sure that the school environment is as accessible as possible.

At PAU we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **The specific duties**

### **First Duty:**

To publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This policy is available on PAU's website: [www.poplaradolescentunit.essex.sch.uk](http://www.poplaradolescentunit.essex.sch.uk)

We promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities by:

- (a) Celebrating the diverse nature of our society
- (b) Tackling inequalities where they are present
- (c) Ensuring that all our policies and practices treat those with disabilities or undergoing treatment in an equal manner to those people who do not have a disability.
- (d) Ensuring that all disabled people with disabilities are not placed at a disadvantage.

How do we do this? We:

- Adopt a proactive approach, for example by making reasonable adjustments at every level of the school;
- Draw on detailed information, for example by using data on the presence, participation and attainment of all students to inform the priorities in the school/hospital accessibility plan;
- Involve all young people, for example by asking them to identify issues to be addressed in the accessibility plan;
- Collect information about staff and parents who may have disabilities; and adapt the environment and resources to meet their individual needs.

### **Data collection:**

Statistical information relating to attainment, exclusions, SEN, admissions, staffing issues (e.g. recruitment, grievances, professional development, and performance management) complaints, and achievements will be gathered and analysed. The staff responsible for collating information will provide short analyses of the qualitative and quantitative information that has been collected pointing out trends, developments, disproportionalities and any other anomalies in the outcomes for different groups.

### **Using the Information:**

The Executive Head is responsible for ensuring that action is taken to address any adverse impact that may be identified through monitoring.

### **Second Duty:**

To prepare and publish equality objectives.

Following assessment of existing practices in relation to equality we have set three objectives to help us improve further:

1. To promote and enhance community cohesion and a sense of shared belonging in the school, and in the school's neighbourhood.
2. To promote the work of PAU and inform and support local educational settings in working with young people with mental health difficulties.
3. To ensure PAU's policies and procedures are reviewed regularly for disability and equality issues.

### **PAU's Accessibility Plan**

The same duties as previously existed under the Disability Discrimination Act have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010. The plan shows how the school is:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable those with disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and
- improving the availability of accessible information to those with disabilities.
- See Accessibility Plan (Appendix 1)

# **Accessibility Policy**

## **Aims:**

- To develop a curriculum accessible to those with or without disabilities, providing opportunities for all young people to learn together and celebrate their diversities
- To create and maintain a physical environment that is adaptable and responsive to the needs of the current cohort
- Provide information in a variety of formats to reach intended persons in an appropriate and effective way
- To ensure written Local Authority policies are implemented.

## **Accessibility of Information**

It is essential with any information that it reaches the target audience in an effective way – therefore we as a unit must be mindful that the communication serves its purpose. We aim to review and improve, where necessary, written information to all young people, staff, parents/carers and other agencies.

- Hand-outs, worksheets etc. to be altered digitally for ease of reading
- Notices should be laid out effectively with use of graphics/visuals to aid those who may find it difficult to read or extract the salient meaning.
- Timetables can be produced in larger format/colour coded and contain less or more information in accordance with the person that is following it.
- Information about school events can be communicated in many formats – by phone, leaflet, poster, email, internet etc.
- Information can also be given in formats such as Braille, large print, simplified language, Makaton symbols, signing, audio or video.

## **Involving young people, staff and other users with disabilities**

Accessibility and empowerment has been increased by seeking and using views. Methods have included:

- Surveys
- Induction materials
- Self-evaluations
- Independent advocacy (Barnardos)
- Critique of existing materials and resources
- Information sharing regarding what works best
- Evaluation and monitoring after discharge
- Involvement with professionals from outside agencies
- Professional development for staff

## **Physical Environment**

We aim to provide:

- Appropriate furniture to create adequate space in the rooms
- A designated indoor space to spend break times.
- Purpose built rooms with extra space and access to lower sinks and tables (currently the Art and Design room.)
- Natural and overhead lighting that can be manipulated into various combinations through blinds, dimmers etc.
- Use of touch sensitive screens, interactive whiteboards.
- Adequate sized toilet facilities with grab rails etc.
- Controllable heating/air conditioning for maximum comfort of the learners

## **Curriculum and provision management**

We aim to maximise the extent to which young people with disabilities of any nature can participate in all that the curriculum has to offer, with options as appropriate to the individual. The provision of a key teacher, behaviour support worker, and generally low student numbers ensures that support and advice is always on hand, and that subtle signs of misunderstanding or difficulty can be picked up and addressed by the adults present relatively easily and quickly. Access can also be improved by:

- Peer grouping and assistance, generating support and cohesion in the group
- Use of internal partners, those on the ward such as doctors, analysts etc.
- External agencies – speech and language therapists, occupational therapy services, educational psychologists and other professionals
- Links with other schools that may have experience of certain disability management.
- Use of ICT and other communication aids and resources.
- Effective deployment of staff
- Development of disability awareness through the curriculum.
- Disability statement

## **Responsibilities for Disability Equality Policy**

- a) The Executive Head is responsible for this policy and for making sure that it is acted upon. The Executive Head will monitor and evaluate the operation and impact of this scheme and provide the resources and support structures needed to ensure effective implementation of the action plans flowing from it.
- b) The Executive Head may choose to delegate the day-to-day responsibility for the management of the scheme to the teaching staff. The teaching staff may be given such responsibilities as deemed appropriate to:

1. Ensure the effective implementation of the policy;
  2. Communicate the scheme and its implications to pupils, parents and other bodies;
  3. Organise the delivery of the relevant training;
  4. Monitor and report on the operation of the scheme;
  5. Take any remedial actions as required.
- c) This disability equality policy applies to all staff. Some staff may, from time to time, be given specific responsibilities for the implementation of aspects of the scheme, such as the investigation of reported incidents of disability related harassment or disability discrimination, monitoring the implementation of the scheme; or, conducting equality impact assessments. Staff will be consulted on the implementation of the scheme through the normal procedures that apply, and via the relevant trade unions.
- d) The disability equality policy applies to all young people, regardless of whether they receive some or all of their education at this school.
- e) Parents/carers, visitors and contractors and other persons coming on to the school site will be informed of our commitment to disability equality and will be expected to comply with the relevant aspects of our disability equality scheme.

### **Training and Development**

We will review the training and development needs of members of the Poplar Adolescent Unit as part of the annual process of reviewing this policy. All staff are expected to undertake an induction programme to ensure that they are aware of the content of the scheme and its implications for the work of the Unit.

The training and development needs of staff will be considered as part of the arrangements for performance management. Relevant staff training opportunities will be funded and made available within the normal working day as well as through twilight sessions.

### **Breaches of Policy**

Breaches of our policy on disability equality will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary policy.

## **Harassment and Disability Discrimination**

We will not tolerate disability related harassment and will deal with it through our relevant established procedures. All staff are responsible for ensuring that incidents of disability related harassment or disability discrimination are recorded and referred to the relevant member of the senior leadership group. We will monitor and report on such incidents on a regular basis.

## **Mapping Policies and Practices**

Associated policies have been mapped according to priority. We have paid particular regard to:

- Anti Bullying
- Accessibility
- Child protection
- Exclusion
- Complaints
- Teaching and learning
- Health and safety
- Behaviour for learning
- Special educational needs
- Physical intervention
- Transition and reintegration
- Safeguarding
- Equal opportunities
- Work related learning

All policies are reviewed according to a review schedule and are monitored by the Executive Head and the Management Committee. All the policies listed above, especially, are reviewed through our commitment to ensure disability-equality issues are up to date and relevant. Full details of conducting impact assessments on policies are given in Appendix 2.

## **Requirement to provide Auxiliary Aids**

From September 2012 schools are required to provide auxiliary aids (and services) for disabled pupils to overcome any disadvantage experienced in schools. Advice on meeting this requirement can be found on pages 17-20 of the EHRC's Reasonable Adjustments' Guidance in the Downloads' section. Alternatively, we can seek guidance from specialist staff from the local authorities.

## **Including children with medical needs**

In September 2014 a new duty came into force for governing bodies/management committees to ensure arrangements are in place in school to support pupils with



medical conditions. The guidance includes statutory and non-statutory advice under the Children and Families Act 2014. The statutory guidance applies to all maintained schools, academies and free schools. For children with SEN&D, this guidance should be read in conjunction with the new SEND Code of Practice.

The new guidance document reiterates existing good practice and clarifies accountability.

Children and young people with medical conditions are entitled to a full education and have the same rights of admission to school as other children. This means that no child with a medical condition should be denied admission or prevented from taking up a place in school because arrangements for their medical condition have not been made. The management committees must ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that such children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.

The management committee ensures a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff

For additional information see:

**[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)**

**[The medical conditions at school website](#)**

### **Planning inclusive visits**

PAU aims to:

- provide all young people with a wide range of experiences outside the classroom, including extended school activities, theatre trips etc.
- offer high quality learning experiences.
- manage all visits and events safely and efficiently.

Equality legislation sets out a clear expectation that disabled children and young people should be given the same opportunities to participate as their peers. The Local Authority would advise all schools and settings to plan their educational visits and learning outside the classroom opportunities on the basis of assuming that ALL pupils will be able to take part.

For some children and young people with disabilities and additional needs (such as mental health difficulties) the generic risk assessment for the activity will not be sufficient. The medical team will provide frequent mental state assessments and Essex County Council has devised some planning checklists to help schools consider additional risks for these pupils.

It is important that schools and settings involve parents, the pupil and, if appropriate, specialist support staff, as early as possible in the planning process, particularly when a residential stay is involved.

Under the Equality Act the school must make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage to their peers. This may include providing additional staffing and accessible transport or ensuring the venue is appropriate to the needs of the pupil concerned. The planning checklists should help highlight any reasonable adjustments needed.

See Outdoor Education Policy and Risk Management Policy.

- **Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years' Settings**
- **Promoting Disability Equality**

Further guidance is available on the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** website.

### **Useful Links**

**Abilitynet** gives free information and advice on any aspect of the use of a computer by someone with a disability.

**Action on Hearing Loss** runs a telephone/teletext helpline and also produces information leaflets and fact sheets.

**Arthritis Care** campaigns nationally, and also works through a network of local groups and centers offering support, advice and training. Information is available on their website and they represent the best source of information nationally on arthritis, its impact and on ways that colleges and centers may best be able to meet the requirements of learners with arthritis.

**<http://www.autism-anglia.org.uk>** Leading charity for people affected by autism.

**British Deaf Association** is an organisation of Deaf people that represents the Deaf community.

**The British Dyslexia Association** offers advice, information and help to families, professionals and dyslexic individuals. It works to raise awareness and understanding of dyslexia, and to effect change. BDA provides a range of useful resources related to dyslexia.

**Broadbandsuppliers** is a site which collates valuable advice on online resources for disabled users.

**Foundation for people with learning disabilities** The Foundation provides information, resources and services and tries to influence government and local authority policies and services so that they better meet the needs people with learning disabilities.

**Gov.uk – disabled People** This part of the Gov.uk website has been designed to help people find out about their civil rights. It provides information on legislation that exists to help establish employees and employers.

**Diabetes UK** has a mass of information about diabetes that is of wider interest and would certainly be helpful to schools.

**Down's Syndrome Association** (DSA) provides information, advice and support to parents and individuals with Downs Syndrome. It also provides information and advice to professionals whose work requires an understanding of the condition.

**Dyslexia Action** (DA) is a charity that specialises in the assessment and teaching of people with dyslexia and is now the only national dyslexia teaching organisation in the world. It seeks ways to improve the effectiveness of teaching and also focuses on the development of teaching materials.

**Epilepsy Action** has developed a large website that includes basic information about the condition that will be useful to schools. The site also provides an index of reference material for those who wish to develop a more detailed understanding of epilepsy.

**The Equality Human Rights' Commission** (EHRC) is an independent body, established to eliminate the discrimination faced by disabled people and to promote equality of opportunity. The EHRC produces many useful guides and publications such as how to organise disability awareness/equality training and it has a fully accessible helpline.

**Mencap** is one of the major organisations for people with learning difficulties.

Mencap has produced an education resource pack for those over 16 years old which supports their Essential Skills Award. The resource was developed by Mencap National College and focuses on enabling learners to develop “practical skills for the real world”. For more information on the award, call Tracy Wardle on **01935 403120** or e-mail **tracy.wardle@mencap.org.uk**.

**The Mental Health Foundation** The Foundation produces many publications on mental health. It also produces a newsletter, monthly updates and factsheets.

**MIND** (National Association for Mental Health) is a mental health charity covering England and Wales. Factsheets can be downloaded from their website on issues such as mental health problems and learning disabilities.

**National Autistic Society**

provides an enormous amount of information ranging from introductory information to links to research sites. This is an extremely valuable resource for education professionals.

**National Deaf Children's Society (NCDS)**

Provides professionals with the latest information on campaigns, government news, NCDS projects and academic and professional research, publications and resources that are available to you.

**NASEN** (The National Association for Special Educational Needs) is an organisation that provides a forum for those actively involved with exceptional learning needs and/or disabilities and contributes to the formulation and development of policy in the area. NASEN also publishes quarterly the British Journal of Special Education and Support for Learning.

**National Autistic Society** provides an enormous amount of information ranging from introductory information to links to research sites. This is an extremely valuable resource for education professionals.

**NDCS** (National Deaf Children's Society) campaigns to break down barriers faced by deaf children and young people. The website provides a considerable amount of information and research for families, young people and professionals working in the field.

**RADAR** (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation) provides information and advice on all aspects of disability and has also compiled a list of recommended Disability Awareness or Equality trainers.

**Royal National Institute of Blind People** (RNIB) produces a huge range of resource materials. It runs a telephone information service and supports this with a range of fact sheets. One of the main ways in which LAs, schools and colleges will need to respond to DDA Part 4 is by ensuring that blind and partially sighted students can have access to teaching materials. RNIB has a wealth of experience in this area.

**Sense** The national (UK) voluntary organization working with and supporting people of all ages who are deafblind or have associated disabilities.

**Scope** is a national organisation for people with cerebral palsy. It also offers a range of services to professional staff in education and social services including information and advice. The Scope website offers a large quantity of useful information online

and also provides a large index of additional publications that colleagues working primarily with disabled students will find very useful. The site is large and it may be helpful to go directly to the online publications catalogue: [www.scope.org.uk/action/publications/index.shtml](http://www.scope.org.uk/action/publications/index.shtml)

**SHINE** is happy to provide information to professionals working with young people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus to enable them to provide improved support. Their website includes a publications section which is extremely helpful for education staff.

**World of Inclusion** provides training and resources primarily for schools, but also for colleges and local authorities around the issue of inclusion for all students within our education system.

The requirement for schools to prepare an accessibility plan is set out in schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

Target	Tasks	Timescale	Resources	Responsibility	Monitoring
<p><b>Access to Curriculum</b></p> <p>Ensure ICT appropriate for pupils with disabilities both in the education centre and on the ward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review accessibility of ICT (including notepads &amp; whiteboards) using specialist expertise e.g. AB.</li> <li>▪ Wi Fi feasibility</li> <li>▪ Involve pupils in review of hard &amp; software.</li> <li>▪ Prioritise new software to purchase.</li> <li>▪ Training for all staff on notebook /WiFi use.</li> </ul>	Summer Term 2016	<p>Time from AB</p> <p>£5,000</p> <p>Half day x 5 staff</p>	ICT Co-ord & SENCo	Executive Head
<p><b>Access to Curriculum</b></p> <p>Create effective learning environments for all utilising feedback from pupil groups.</p> <p>Resources for young people on ward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reinforce responsibilities of all teachers as outlined in the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement including alternative accreditation routes.</li> <li>▪ Circulate 'Reasonable Adjustments' Classroom Checklist / Provision map to all staff. Ensure all classrooms and resources are organised in accordance with pupil need. Physical space wheelchair access, translators etc.</li> <li>▪ Ongoing programme of staff training in disability awareness to reflect diverse needs of students within the school and anticipatory duties.</li> <li>▪ Audit ward needs and resources. Printer?</li> <li>▪ Seek issues and feedback from 'SHEU'</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<p>Achievement for All (EP) Twilight Personalising Learning</p> <p>INSET Outside speaker (Peter – advocate)</p> <p>Half Day cover for Activities Co-ordinator</p>	All staff CB (Assessment Policy)	<p>SENCo through lesson observations and sampling lesson planning</p> <p>Management Committee</p> <p>Activities Co-ordinator</p>

	<p>Pupil Survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review PE and Healthy Schools scheme.</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Access to wider curriculum</b></p> <p>Increase participation in school activities on and off-site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit participation in extra-curricular activities and identify any barriers.</li> <li>Ensure school activities are accessible to all students.</li> <li>Investigate TA flexibility to cover extra curricular activities if needed.</li> <li>Link visits to curriculum plans. Complete paperwork for outdoor visits resource file.</li> <li>To identify opportunities for community events e.g. art trail, links with primary school.</li> </ul>	Spring term 2016	<p>Management Committee to identify contingency budget</p> <p>Training needed on risk assessments for trips and extra curricular activities.</p>	Management Committee	Executive Head
<p><b>Impact Analysis</b></p> <p>Ensure all policies consider the implications of Disability Access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review according to Policy Review Schedule. Involve young people in all reviews.</li> <li>Monitor differentiation statement.</li> <li>Consult pupils and staff on any proposed changes.</li> <li>Introduce new policies</li> </ul>	Summer 2017	All staff	Senco Management Committee	Executive Head

<p><b>Premises</b></p> <p>Increase site access to meet diverse needs of pupils, staff, parents and community users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review personal fire evacuation plans.</li> <li>▪ Look into feasibility of a low arousal space and resources such as stress toys.</li> <li>▪ Improve signage of evacuation procedures, internet safety, fire drill etc</li> <li>▪ Review new signage of room functions.</li> </ul>	<p>January 2014</p> <p>Summer 2016</p>	<p>Work with Estates</p> <p>Team meetings with ward</p>	<p>All Staff</p>	<p>Management Committee</p>
<p><b>Attitudes</b></p> <p>To promote positive attitudes to disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map PSHE Curriculum with SMSC</li> <li>▪ Widen focus of Different/Same theme</li> <li>▪ Regular items for Poplar Press highlighting achievements of pupils with disabilities.</li> <li>▪ INSET sessions with local schools and colleges. To promote the work of PAU and inform and support local educational settings in working with young people with mental health difficulties.</li> </ul>	<p>Spring Term 16</p>	<p>£200 for any new resources</p>	<p>PSHE Co-ord</p>	<p>Executive Head</p>
<p><b>Newsletters and Information</b></p> <p>Availability of documents in alternative formats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large print and audio formats etc as required.</li> <li>▪ Monitor uptake of documents in alternative formats</li> <li>▪ Review accessibility of newsletter and letters for parents.</li> <li>▪ Work on ward available as information sheets in alternative formats as appropriate.</li> <li>▪ Use Dragon Dictates and speech translators.</li> </ul>	<p>Summer Term 16</p>	<p>£150 for any new resources</p>	<p>Admin. Manager</p>	<p>Executive Head</p>



## Appendix 2

### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

#### Guidance for the Conduct of Assessments

Our arrangements for assessing the impact of our policies on pupils, staff and parents consist of a rolling programme of disability equality assessments of existing policies. We also require that new policies be assessed as part of the policy formulation process. This rolling programme prioritises those policies, procedures and practices in the school's Policy Review Programme that are identified as 'high' priority and then those identified as 'medium' priority.

There are many aspects of the work of the school that could be relevant for impact assessments. These include:

- (a) Staff
  - recruitment and retention;
  - pay and rewards;
  - training and professional development;
  - performance management;
  - consultation and involvement;
  - grievance and disciplinary matters.
  
- (b) Young people
  - admissions and attendance;
  - teaching, learning and curriculum matters;
  - progress, attainment and assessment;
  - personal development and pastoral care;
  - behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
  - harassment.
  
- (c) Other bodies
  - governing body matters;
  - parental consultation and involvement;
  - collaborate with external bodies;
  - contracting arrangements.
  
- (d) Accessibility
  - Premises
  - Communications
  - Curriculum access
  - Involvement of people with disabilities

## **Our Key Policies for Disability Equality Impact Assessment**

Policies seen by the school as being particularly relevant in terms of disability equality are those relating to: attainment, curriculum, accessibility, special educational needs, admission and attendance, pastoral care, harassment and bullying, good community and race relations, staff recruitment and career development, discipline and exclusion, health and safety, membership of the governing body, partnership, procurement.

## **The Form and Purpose of our Impact Assessments**

The disability equality impact assessment will

- Monitor a policy, procedure or practice for any adverse impact in terms of disability; or ,
- Assess and consult on the likely disability equality impact of a proposed new policy, procedure or practice

The assessment will:

- Make sure that pupils, staff and parents have access to information
- Involve and consult disabled people at each stage of the process
- Highlight training and support needed by staff to enable them to ensure the quality and equality of the service they provide.

The assessment must:

- Get to the 'core issues and priorities' as quickly as possible
- Satisfy stakeholders, both internally and externally, that it has been a sufficiently rigorous exercise – in proportion to the importance of the issue and the nature of the policy, procedure and practice that is being assessed
- Identify what is working well and what needs to be improved
- Focus on outcomes and tangible improvements
- Establish disability equality issues within the school's wider review and decision-making processes.

Each assessment will have three stages.

### **Stage 1     Scoping**

- Agreeing who will lead and carry out the assessment
- Developing an initial view of the key issues relating to the policy, procedure or practice under question
- Agreeing what is going to be assessed, how this will be done and developing a realistic timetable.
- Getting feedback and advice by opening up the assessor's initial views to the views of stakeholders.

- Considering the evidence and the issues relating to disability equality, diversity and social cohesion that will provide the initial focus of the impact assessment.

Before beginning the main assessment, the person conducting it will offer an initial view of what they think are the main disability equality issues in relation to the policy, procedure or practice being assessed. This should be based only on the perceptions of the person conducting the assessment.

Things to consider:

- What is the impact of the policy, procedure or practice in relation to disability?
- How do you think that the policy, procedure or practice currently meets the needs of people with disabilities within the school?
- Do you think that the policy, procedure or practice contributes to promoting disability equality, diversity and community cohesion within the school? If so, in what way?
- What regular consultation does the school carry out with different communities and groups regarding different aspect of the policy, procedure or practice?
- How are people with disabilities involved?
- Are there any examples of good practice or positive measures to increase access?
- Do you think that the policy procedure or practice presents any barriers to any community or group?

This initial view will then be shared with pupils with disabilities, staff and parents as well as relevant colleagues, governors, external stakeholder groups and advisers to help identify any gaps in it.

## **Stage 2      Assessment**

This stage begins by recollecting what external stakeholders and/or advisors may have said about the initial view that was taken of the policy, procedure or practice.

The aim of the assessment is to identify whether the policy, procedure or practice has an adverse impact upon people with disabilities and other groups or communities and how it might affect the promotion of positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.

The assessment should ultimately produce solutions, which help remove any barriers, which are identified.

This stage has two parts. The first part concentrates on the aims of the policy, procedure or practice in question. The second part looks at the practical implementation of the policy, procedure or practice.

Some things to consider for Assessment Part 1:

- What specific need is the policy/procedure or practice designed to meet?
- What are the current priorities?
- Could these be in conflict with equality of opportunity, promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities?
- Do you think that there are any aspects of the policy, procedure or practice that could contribute to inequality?
- Is there evidence of how the policy/procedure or practice contributes to improving the quality of life of specific communities or groups within the school? Is there any data available which demonstrates this?
- Are there examples of good practice that can be built on?
- Does the policy, procedure, or practice include measures designed to promote equality of opportunity?
- Are the aims of the policy, procedure or practice consistent with wider school policies on equality, diversity and social inclusion. For example, do they help reduce tensions, close achievement gaps, value diversity and increase a sense of belonging amongst different communities or groups?

Some things to consider for Assessment Part 2:

- What do available data and results of any consultations show about the impact of the policy, procedure or practice?
- How do current practices affect people with disabilities with different needs?
- If there is adverse impact, what are the reasons for this? Consider direct or indirect discrimination.
- What practical changes would help reduce any adverse impact on particular groups or categories of people with disabilities? For example, changes in communication methods, reasonable adjustments, changes in eligibility criteria, amended programmes or adoption of outreach approaches.
- What can be done to improve access to and take up of the service provided or understanding of the policy procedure or practice? For example, increased awareness among staff, staffing profile reflecting community needs, a more inclusive school ethos, and community input into programmes.
- What would be the benefits of making the above changes and are there any negative impacts that such an action would have on different communities in the school?

The process should not be so rigid, or so lengthy, that the central aims of improving the relevance of policies, procedure and practices are lost. Good data will be key to effectiveness, but problems in obtaining comprehensive data should not be allowed to hold up the assessment process.

The final assessment should be presented to disabled people within the school community, outside stakeholders and/or advisers for feedback, comment and advice before final decisions are taken on action.

### **Stage 3**

### **Decisions and Action**

Following any feedback, comment and advice from the outside stakeholders and/or advisers the person conducting the assessment should make recommendations for any changes to the policy, procedure or practice and these should then be referred to Executive Head for decision as appropriate.

Following approval by the Executive Head and with the members of staff responsible for the policy area – the assessor should formulate an action plan for implementing any policy or procedural changes that have been agreed and set out the arrangements by which the policy or procedure, as amended, will continue to be monitored.

Finally, the assessor should prepare for publication a short statement of the disability equality impact assessment, its findings and the action taken.