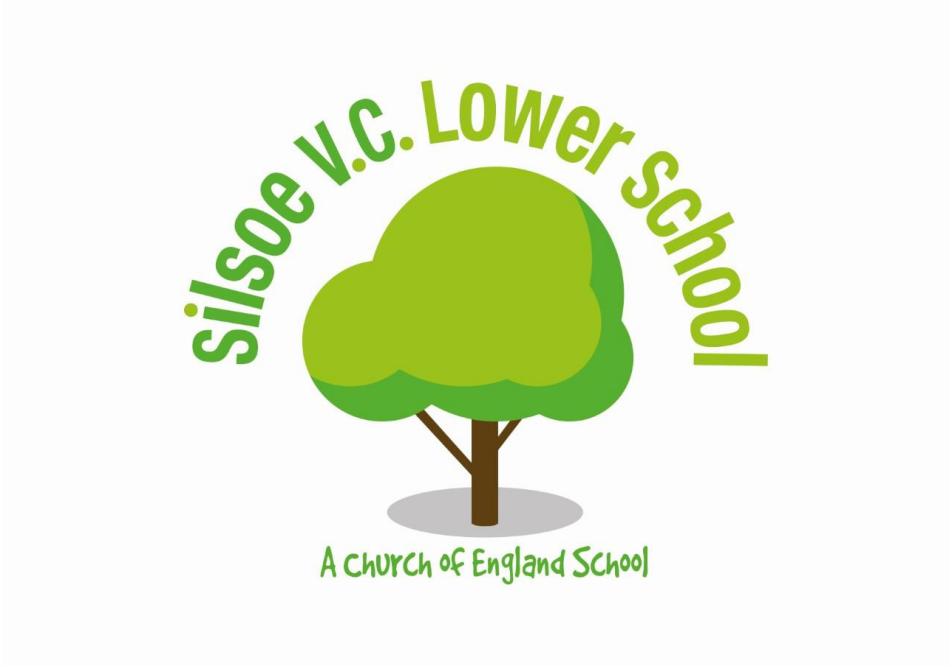

Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan

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Introduction and Legal Background

The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education reform. Therefore, since September 2002, the Governing Board has had three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the DDA: -

- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils. This accessibility plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Board of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

The plan identifies how the school aims to: -

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- improve the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled

In 2010 the DDA was replaced by the Equality Act in England, Scotland and Wales. The Equality Act covers all of the provisions of the DDA and provides additional protection from: -

- indirect discrimination
- discrimination arising from disability
- discrimination on the basis of association or perception

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty which extends to all protected characteristics – race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. The duty applies to all elements of school life and to all members of the school community.

Schools are also required to maintain and update their accessibility plan to ensure they increase access over time. It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary. Detailed below is a set of action plans showing how the school will address the priorities identified in the plan.

1. Starting Points

1A: The purpose and direction of the school's plan: vision and values

Silsoe school believes in social inclusion and as such all members of staff, governors, parents and pupils will work together to provide equal access to the school curriculum and the school environment to anyone with a disability.

To this end we aim to: -

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils, disabled parents and/ or disabled staff members
- Eliminate discrimination by raising staff awareness, raising expectations and improving communication
- Eliminate harassment by raising awareness and ensuring that disability related harassment of disabled pupils, staff, parents, carers and other users of the school is identified and addressed.
- Promote positive attitudes through respect for disabled people, promoting positive images and promoting representation of disabled people within the senior positions in the school.
- Encourage participation for disabled pupils in the public life of the school
- Provide positive discrimination or make reasonable adjustments if needed to meet the needs of disabled people.

1B: Information from pupil data and school audit

School Audit

The most recent outcomes, from the school self evaluation of inclusion, found that the school was good at making provision for pupils with identified disabilities and pupils facing difficulties in accessing the curriculum for academic, social or physical reasons. Outstanding features were identified and the school continues to strive to improve its capacity to provide fully for all members of the school community.

Areas identified for development: -

- To develop a consistent whole school approach through shared training
- To provide training for new members of staff and new members of the Governing Board
- To ensure knowledge is shared between members of staff, with parents and with pupils in line with the SEND Code of Practice

1C: Views of those consulted during the development of the plan

Parents of pupils with disabilities, teachers, teaching assistants, governors and the school council were consulted during the development of this plan their views contributed to the action plan.

2. The Main Priorities in the School's Plan

2A: Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum

All teachers and teaching assistants will work together to develop the curriculum through differentiated activities and adapted resources to ensure all pupils have equal access to all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum.

To achieve this, we will: -

- Differentiate all lessons as necessary to meet the needs of the full ability range providing personalized learning when necessary
- Provide enlarged and adapted resources
- Provide adaptations to information technology
- Use signs and symbols following the makaton system
- Use widget symbols consistently across the school
- Keep staff training up to date to meet different needs and to provide a full range of opportunities
- Make adjustments as allowed for test access
- Make provision for pupils with medical needs through the appointment of at least three trained first aiders, maintaining a regularly updated medical care list and working closely with parents and guardians to provide for pupils with diagnosed medical conditions or allergies.
- Ensure positive discrimination and reasonable adjustment is used to encourage disabled pupils to participate in all areas of school life
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled parent or carer to attend a school event to support their child or discuss their progress
- Provide carefully considered transition plans for any disabled pupil coming in to or leaving the school
- Work with external agencies and service providers to deliver a fully inclusive extended curriculum
- Develop the signage in the school building and grounds

2B: Improving the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services:

<u>Funding</u>
The school receives a special needs budget each year. This funding is directed according to school priorities and individual pupil needs. Some pupils also receive funding through a statement of educational need or Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) to meet their specified learning needs. The Strategic Resources Committee of the Governing Board will consider accessibility issues when prioritising its maintenance budget and use of its formula capital allocation. Where insufficient funding is available through these routes the school will apply for accessibility grants to help to address accessibility issues.

The Governing Board has worked hard with Central Bedfordshire Council to create an inclusive and accessible site. The individual needs of all children are provided for

whatever their ability, disability or medical need. The school has a strong record on inclusion. This ethos was a fundamental element of our planning for the new school which opened in January 2017.

ICT Facility
ICT needs are specific to individual pupils. The school will consult with specialist professionals to ensure pupils' needs are met in the event of pupils with ASD, communication or physical difficulties needing to access information technology.

All Teaching Areas
Ensure blinds and lighting are kept updated in each classroom and learning area to improve the visibility of the interactive white boards. Seek advice from the Hearing Impairment Service to ensure the environment is conducive to support people with hearing impairment.

External Areas
- Develop play equipment suitable for wheel chair users
- Create sensory areas for sight impaired pupils and adults

2C: Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled:

- Pupils will be provided with information in a format which they can access.
- The school will make it known to parents that all correspondence is available in an alternative format. Teachers will ensure disabled parents are treated with respect and consideration to their needs and requirement. Reasonable adjustment will be provided.
- The school will promote equality of opportunity, challenge and aspiration through the images and literature it uses with all children. Disabled pupils, staff and parents will be represented in literature, IT programs, images and DVDs used in the school.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable a disabled parent or carer to attend as school event to support their child or discuss their progress.

3: Making it happen

3A: Management, coordination and implementation

- Overall responsibility for implementation of the plan will be assumed by the Head Teacher and specific responsibilities will be delegated to the SENCo and Head of Inclusion.
- The Head Teacher will report on progress towards implementing the plan to the Strategic Resources sub committee and Pupils and Curriculum sub committee of the governing body.
- The governor with special responsibility for SEND will include monitoring the implementation of the scheme within their remit.
- The school will include evaluation of the scheme as part of our annual inclusion audit and as part of the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the school's SIP.

3B: Getting hold of the school's plan

The school's plan will be included for download from the school's website.

Related Policies: -

SEND policy
Equality plan