



Edmonton County School Disability Equality Policy

Aim:

At Edmonton County School, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled students, staff and all those receiving services from the school, to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination.

Rationale:

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. The achievement of disabled students 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. At Edmonton County School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Implementation:

1. Definition of Disability:

Edmonton County School will adopt the Disability and Equality Act (DEA) 2010 definition which defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DEA Act has also extended the definition of disability to include people with progressive conditions including HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer. People with a visual impairment are also considered to have a disability.

Edmonton County School also adopts the **social model of disability** which proposes that systemic barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion by society (purposely or inadvertently) are the ultimate factors defining who is disabled and who is not in a particular society. It recognizes that while some people have physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychological variations, which may sometimes cause individual functional limitation or impairments, these do not have to lead to disability, unless society fails to take account of and include people regardless of their individual differences. The model does not deny that some individual differences lead to individual limitations or impairments, but rather that these are not the cause of individuals being excluded.

2. Identifying disability:

As a school we hold a Special Educational Needs list which includes those students defined above. This list is regularly reviewed and updated as part of the schools Inclusion Policy and made available to staff.

We have consulted with staff and asked staff to identify themselves if they perceive themselves to have a disability.

3. Involvement and consultation:

Edmonton County School has conducted a questionnaire with several form groups across four years (90 students) to evaluate student awareness of disabilities and gain their views on areas of access in order for the school to develop its Disability Equality Policy. Identified issues of corridor and stair size are addressed through the school movement around the school rules and procedures.

We will continue to consult with school users and liaise with parents on how to improve access for their children and themselves.

4. What we do:

- Make reasonable adjustments wherever possible for students and staff.
- Some students are allowed to leave lessons several minutes early to avoid any congestion in the corridors.
- Make available adapted chairs for both students and staff.
- Have a separate fire evacuation drill for those staff and students who require it.
- Edmonton County School has some accessible parts to the building and promotes their use when we hire out rooms or parts of the building.
- Edmonton County School makes any new structural build accessible.
- Events for parents and carers such as open evenings, meetings with teachers, are held in accessible parts of the building where possible and adjustment is made for parents and carers who cannot access all parts of the building.
- When hiring transport we provide accessible vehicles as appropriate.
- Monitor incidents of harassment and bullying of disabled pupils. Encourage pupils to report and take action against offenders.
- Governors ensure that the procedures for candidates to stand for election and for parents to vote for candidates are accessible to disabled people.
- Promote positive attitudes to disability. Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Provide loop system for students and staff with hearing impairments.
- Use the school environment to celebrate and highlight key events such as the Paralympics, Deaf Awareness Week and Learning Disability Week.
- Provide signers for parents with hearing impairments at parents evening and student review meetings.
- We have held sign language sessions for interested staff during lunch times.
- Encourage staff to go to occupational health if they have any health concerns and act on any recommendations made to support staff.
- Conduct risk assessments, when appropriate, for new students entering the school at year 7 transition, mid-term admission or as part of the schools Inclusive Resource Base (IRB).
- Conduct risk assessments, when appropriate, for students returning to school after illness or injury.

5. What we are planning to do:

- When providing newsletters and information for parents and carers, Edmonton County School will make this information available in an accessible format so that parents or carers, who may be, for example, visually impaired, can access the information.

- Investigate the possibility of producing information for parents on DVDs with a signer.
- Identify disabled parents and carers.
- Raise awareness about disability for students and staff.
- Ensure that disabled pupils are represented and encouraged to participate in class assemblies, plays, events, and clubs and on the school council.
- Organise a Disability Equality Working Party consisting of interested staff to meet annually to monitor and revise the Policy.

6. Monitoring:

The Disability Equality Policy will be monitored and reviewed in line with the school policy review schedule to monitor the impact of the action taken to ensure that progress is being made towards meeting the Disability Equality Duty, and to ensure that no adverse impact is occurring as a result of the actions. If any adverse impacts are identified during the monitoring process, the action plan will need to be revised.

At Edmonton County we will monitor the following:

- Achievement of pupils by disability.
- Disabled staff (including numbers, type of disability and satisfaction rates in staff surveys etc.).
- Building access.
- Curriculum access.
- Incidents of bullying, harassment and discrimination towards disabled people in school.