

The Disability Equality Duty

What does it mean for Schools
in England and Wales?



What is the Disability Equality Duty?

The Disability Equality Duty is a new positive duty on all public bodies to promote disability equality.

All primary and secondary schools maintained by a local education authority, and all local authorities themselves, are covered by the Disability Equality Duty. This means that, alongside their existing duties, schools and local authorities will have to take proactive steps to promote disability equality for pupils, employees, and service users.



What do I have to do?

The duty to promote disability equality, or the **general duty**, requires all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
- Take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment.

Certain listed public authorities are also covered by **specific duties** which set out certain measuring, action planning, and reporting mechanisms that you need to take to meet the general duty. The most important requirement of the specific duties is to produce a **Disability Equality Scheme**.

All maintained schools and local authorities have to produce their own Disability Equality Schemes by the following dates:

What?

Local Authorities

Secondary Schools

All Primary and Secondary Schools

Primary Schools

Primary and Secondary Special Schools

Pupil Referral Units

Where?

When?

England and Wales

4 December 2006

England

4 December 2006

Wales

1 April 2007

England

3 December 2007

England

3 December 2007

England

3 December 2007

Where do I start?

- Find out when you need to have your Disability Equality Scheme in place.
- Make sure that all senior staff and/or governors in your organisation know about the duty and what they need to do.
- Set up a DED working group to begin drafting your scheme.
- Involve disabled children and adults in the working group from the start.
- Involve children and adults, in prioritising the actions you want to take, and the outcomes that you want to see at the end of three years.

Where can I get more information?

The DRC has produced a Code of Practice and separate guidance for schools, as well as guidance on other issues such as involvement and gathering evidence.

The Code of Practice, all pieces of guidance and lots more can be found at: www.dotheduty.org.

Do the Duty!

If you'd like this publication in an alternative format or language please contact the Helpline. It's also available on the DRC website.

You can contact the DRC Helpline by voice, text, fax, post or by email via the website. You can speak to an operator at any time between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday.

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