



DISABILITY POLICY

The Principal, March 2010
Formal Review Date: 2011



DISABILITY POLICY

Red House Academy has adopted this policy from Sunderland City Council

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About this Scheme

This scheme was published in December 2006. The language used in this document is intended to be easy to understand, respectful and non-offensive. However it is acknowledged that there can be different views regarding what is and is not appropriate language when talking about disability or people with disability, so a mixture of terms have been used.

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this document in an alternative format such as Braille, Large Print, Audio Tape, Easy to Read, or in a different language, please contact the Council's Diversity and Inclusion Team on:

Tel.	0191 553 1226
Fax.	0191 553 1216
e-mail	equality@sunderland.gov.uk
Address	Diversity and Inclusion Team Civic Centre Burdon Road Sunderland SR2 7DN

Introduction

Welcome to Red House Academy's Disability Equality Scheme.

This scheme gives the Academy the chance to describe its commitment to disability equality. We firmly believe in the Social Model of Disability and are committed to playing our part in removing physical barriers, barriers to communication, unhelpful procedures, negative behaviours and attitudes that continue to affect disabled people in our society.

This document explains what has been done within the Academy so far to remove barriers, and improve access to services and employment. It describes future plans and how disabled people have been, and continue to be, fully involved in the development of those plans. It explains how disability equality fits within the Academy's wider equality agenda.

The Purpose of this Disability Equality Scheme

This scheme outlines how the Academy will positively implement actions to achieve disability equality. More specifically the production and publication of this document gives the Academy an opportunity to:

- State our commitment to disability equality
- Find out what disabled people need and what is important to them
- Involve disabled people in the writing of a policy that directly affects them
- Agree and list specific actions based on the needs and priorities of people with disability
- Describe how we will meet our legal requirements
- Publish our responsibilities and intentions to everyone
- Describe what methods and systems we will use to improve disability equality
- Describe what methods will be used to monitor and measure our progress
- Describe how we work with partner organisations in Sunderland who are also committed to disability equality
- Describe how disability equality fits with general equality work and other Academy priorities

How this Disability Equality Scheme was developed

We believe that it is crucial to involve disabled people in the development and progress of this scheme. Our first step was to ask local disabled people who should be involved and how they should be involved. The Council's approach to this is described in detail in the 'Involving Disabled People in the Council's Disability Equality Scheme Plan' section, which is Appendix 2 of this document.

The Council's Corporate Equality Steering Group members, managers, employees and Trade Unions have had the opportunity to contribute to the content of the scheme and action plan. It has been agreed by Senior Managers, members of Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee.

The Academy intends to meet its legal requirement and publish this Disability Equality Scheme. This will be done via the Academy's website www.redhouseacademy.co.uk

1. Sunderland's Equality Vision

Sunderland aims:

To make Sunderland the place where everyone feels welcome and can be part of a safe, inclusive community, where people will feel secure and can enjoy life without worrying about becoming a victim of crime.

This statement is taken from the Sunderland Strategy 2008 to 2023. All of the organisations in the Sunderland Partnership are responsible for delivering the strategy, including the Academy. This will be achieved through the development of a Local Area Agreement which describes the action that will be taken.

2. The law

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) first came into force in 1995. It gave disabled people specific rights and made it illegal to unfairly discriminate against a disabled person when delivering services and offering employment. The act was amended in 2005 and now includes the following requirements:

General duties of the Act:

- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate discrimination which is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's abilities even where this involves treating a disabled person more favourably than other people.

As well as the above, the Academy also has an extra responsibility to meet the requirements of the following specific duties:

Specific Duties of the Act:

- To publish a Disability Equality Scheme (including within it an Action Plan)
- Involve disabled people in producing the scheme and action plan
- Demonstrate they have taken actions in the scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes
- Report on progress
- Review and revise the scheme

These extra requirements have been introduced with the aim of making organisations more proactive in their consideration of the overall needs of disabled people, promoting and supporting disability equality and not just responding to the requirements of individual disabled people when they arise. All Academies must comply with all of the general and specific duties described above.

How the Academy will meet the Duties of the Act

The following sections of this document describe the work that the Academy has done, and is doing, to meet all of the general and specific duties of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). Some of this work involves putting systems in place to manage disability equality, and therefore may not be immediately visible to customers. However this work is crucial for the future so that disability equality becomes an automatic consideration when planning and managing our services.

3. Who is covered by this Scheme

This scheme covers anyone who has a disability. The law defines disability as a substantial impairment that has a long term, adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day to day activities. It would be very difficult however for us to measure whether a person would fit this definition at point of contact, or when planning services. Instead we take the approach that we should aim to plan and deliver services and functions in a way that takes account of individual needs and potential barriers.

4. Why we need Disability Equality

Despite the existence of law to protect disabled people, research and statistics indicate that disability inequality still exists in workplaces and in wider society.

The Academy believes that disability equality is essential, not just because of the law but because the inclusion and participation of disabled people in our society is essential to the achievement of our overall vision for the community.

It is clear to see however that our ability to achieve our vision is considerably reduced if disabled people in the community are unable to, or have difficulty fully participating in all aspects of life.

5. Disability in Sunderland

Because of the ambiguous definition of disability in law and the reliance on disabled people self declaring their disability, accurate statistics do not exist for the actual number of people living in Sunderland who have a disability. However approximate figures are available which give us an indication of disability in Sunderland.

Sunderland has a higher than average percentage of disabled people, 21% compared to the national average of 16%, this is approximately 60,000 people in Sunderland. We have a higher than average percentage of people living with limiting long term illness, 24% compared to a national average of 18%. It could be that the same people are represented in both figures, however this would still indicate that at least **1 in 5** people in Sunderland have a disability or limiting illness.

In reality it is likely that there are more disabled people than the figures above suggest. Many people with disability don't realise they are disabled as defined by the Disability

Discrimination Act, and therefore do not record themselves as such. Disabled people may also choose not to declare their disability, which of course they have a right to do. However, even if we look at the statistics as they stand, disabled people make up a significant proportion of Sunderland's population.

The statistics also show a correlation between disability and age, we are more likely to acquire a disability the older we get. Therefore, due to the fact that we are generally living longer, it is predicted that the number of disabled people living in Sunderland will continue to increase.

This information is necessary when taking into account the current and future needs of the population of Sunderland, and aligning our key priorities to those needs.

6. Disability Equality within the Wider Equality Agenda

The Academy is fully committed to equality of opportunity for all people. In our work to continuously improve equality we try to take an inclusive approach. It is often the case that when taking steps to improve equality for one group, we also indirectly improve equality for others. We also realise that some groups or individuals may have specific needs that require a unique response. This is also taken into account in our approach, as we make sure that we try to understand and meet the needs of a very diverse community.

This is reflected in our equality policies and plans, with a wider Corporate Equality Scheme describing the overall work the Academy is doing to improve equality for all, within which the Disability Equality Scheme fits.

The Equality Standard for Local Government

The Equality Standard is a framework that has been developed to help the Academy to make equality part of everything it does. It provides the Academy with a system to build equality consideration into all of its planning and practice. This is helping the Academy to meet the requirements of the law and over time improve equality performance of the organisation.

The standard has 5 levels, each of which building on the work of the previous. The five levels are:

- Level one - Commitment to a Corporate Equality Scheme
- Level two - Carrying out equality assessment and consultation
- Level three - Setting equality objectives and targets
- Level four - Installing equality information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level five - Achieving and reviewing equality outcomes

There are six strands running through each level, disability, race, gender, age, faith, and sexual orientation. However in its approach it aims to embed equality practice in an inclusive way across all areas of Academy activity.

The Academy is currently working towards level three of the standard. As part of our work so far, we have begun putting in place systems to assess disability equality, consult with disabled people, set disability equality objectives and targets, and monitor disability equality progress. These actions are further explained in the following sections of this

document.

7. Responsibility for Disability Equality within the Academy

Ultimately the whole Academy is responsible for delivering disability equality and this Disability Equality Scheme. Everyone has a part to play in this, from front line staff to elected members. Disabled people themselves also have a crucial role to play in delivering this agenda. In order to make sure that everyone understands their individual responsibility, it is broadly outlined below.

Every employee, manager and elected member, have the responsibilities listed in the first section below, the following sections identify extra responsibilities individuals have depending on their role in the Academy. The final section identifies the responsibilities disabled people themselves have in helping us to achieve our disability equality vision.

All employees and elected members of the Academy regardless of level have a responsibility;

- To treat colleagues, those from other organisations and all customers with disability in a respectful and dignified way.
- To report to their line manager, or another manager, any incident where they believe a colleague has not acted in accordance with the above.
- To attend any equality training that is provided and apply the knowledge gained to their role.
- To support colleagues to mainstream disability equality into work practices.

All employees dealing with customers have a responsibility;

- To meet the needs of customers or visitors with disability in a sensitive, considerate and inclusive way (or to report to their line manager any situation where this has not been possible).

All Managers including Senior Managers have a responsibility;

- To lead by example and behave in a way that demonstrates commitment to improving and promoting disability equality when developing policies, or planning and managing services.
- To deliver the actions set out within this scheme
- To act on any report of an employee not treating disabled people with respect and dignity, and to do this positively, effectively and promptly.
- To act on any feedback from front line staff regarding inadequacies in meeting the needs of customers with disability, and to do this positively, effectively and promptly.
- To make sure that all aspects of service delivery are planned and delivered in a way that is accessible to and inclusive of disabled people, if this is possible and reasonable to do so.
- To positively engage with the equality processes and systems being installed across the Academy and to make sure that all services are fit for purpose according to the law.

All Elected Members have a responsibility;

- To lead by example and behave in a way that demonstrates commitment to improving

and promoting disability equality when engaging with the public and carrying out their political duties and overseeing the work of the Academy.

-To recognise the importance of equality as a critical factor in the Academy achieving its overall vision for the community.

-To make sure the views of disabled residents are heard and incorporated.

-To act as equality champions, promoting disability equality in all Academy activity.

-To monitor disability equality progress.

Disabled People involved in consultation have a responsibility;

-To attend and participate in any agreed meetings and activities provided to gather the views and opinions of disabled people.

-To act in a positive, open and honest way that supports the progress of disability equality in the Academy and the Community.

8. Resources for Improving Equality

The Council has a dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Team. It is the role of this team to support the progress of equality across the Council and the Sunderland Partnership. A Corporate Equality Steering Group exists within the Council, made up of representatives from all directorates and specialist functions. The role of members of this group is to support directorates and functions to deliver necessary equality requirements and help managers to understand and adopt equality practice.

In terms of budget to support the delivery of this scheme, the Council has already allocated specific resources to support the delivery of some aspects of the plan. The action planning process will further identify any resource requirements, which we will respond to through a phased allocation of budget.

9. Training the Academy's Workforce

It is crucial that each and every employee has the relevant knowledge and understanding to be able to do their job in an appropriate way and with due regard to equality and diversity. The Academy has invested considerable resources in equality/training for many years. Training is designed to be relevant to employees, and participants will always have a clear understanding of how the content relates to their own area of work. Equality training is provided for the following groups:

-Elected Members

-Senior Managers and Heads and Service

-Middle and Operational Managers

-Team Leaders and Supervisors

-Front Line Staff

-All Other Employees

For more detail on the Council's equality training, please contact the Council's Diversity and Inclusion Team, details on page 4 of this document.

10. Involving and Consulting Disabled People

The Academy is fully committed to giving the community an opportunity to be involved in, and influence Academy policy making, service delivery planning, and to be included in the evaluation of service delivery. We believe this ultimately improves services, improves our decision making, improves public confidence and involves local people in the democratic process.

If you would like a copy of the Council's Corporate Community Consultation Strategy, or Hard to Reach Framework, please log on to the Council's Website www.sunderland.gov.uk and log on to 'Have my Say' and then 'Consultation'. Or you can contact the Council's Consultation Manager on Tel. 0191 553 1514.

11. Disability Equality in Service Delivery

The Council developed a Disability Access Strategy in 2004. This document outlined our overall approach to access in service delivery. This included the removal of actual and potential barriers to access for disabled people. The Council's approach was to carry out work to assess and remove, or reduce, the effects of those barriers on disabled people. This has led to some significant changes in the way we deliver services for the public, improving service access location and choice and focusing on the needs of customers.

Assessing Disability Equality in Service Delivery (known as INRA)

Through its work for the Equality Standard the Council has introduced an equality assessment process known as INRA (Impact and Needs Requirement Assessment). This aims to identify any potential direct or indirect barriers to equality in service delivery. The assessments involved checking all policy, major projects, plans and service delivery.

The outcomes of the assessments may mean that consultation is required to identify issues and further actions. Information on any actions are gathered at service, directorate and corporate levels and inform Directorate Equality Plans and the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme. To see a copy of the INRA documentation used, please see Appendix 3.

Service Delivery Disability Equality Monitoring

As part of its work for the Equality Standard the Council is installing systems to measure disability in terms of service take up, usage, satisfaction and complaints. Managers will be responsible for the collection and analysis of this information. Where gaps or trends occur that differ between disabled people and non disabled people, this will prompt the need to carry out a full equality assessment (INRA). Once this has been completed, and the causes of any gaps identified, actions and targets will be set for improvement. Services will be required to report on progress which will feed into the Council's performance management processes, see section 17 of this document.

Access to Services

On a Council wide level, service delivery has undergone significant review in recent years. The review looked at the way services were being delivered and where they were delivered. At the same time the Council had carried out access audits on all of its buildings delivering services to the public. All of this information was looked at and it was agreed that significant change was necessary.

Through the building or refurbishment of state of the art facilities and using the latest technology, Council, health and police services are now available from a variety of accessible locations throughout the City.

As part of this work to make services more accessible the Council will improve the accessibility of Council buildings and facilities.

The Council has invested or earmarked approx £1,314,000 for improving access to services.

Access to Information and Communication

The Academy has set a standard for the way it presents all Academy documents and publicity. This standard includes a need to make information accessible. All services must use the standard and where possible, will produce information and documentation in an accessible way.

It is also a requirement within the standard, that all documents advertise that they are available in a variety of alternative formats on request i.e. in Braille, Large Print, Audio Tape, Easy to Read.

The Academy recognises that some customers may have specific communication requirements. The Academy has addressed this by making sure that customer service points and meeting rooms are fitted with appropriate communication equipment. Front line staff have been trained in meeting the needs of customers with specific communication requirements. To support this, we have provided all staff with a manual that gives information on how to provide reasonable adjustments in terms of adaptations and approach.

We have also made sure that our website meets all of the government standards relating to accessibility.

Customer Service

Disabled people often comment that a major cause of hurt and annoyance is the way they are treated. So to make sure that Academy employees treat disabled people with respect, dignity, sensitivity and consideration, we have provided mandatory equality training for all staff. This training includes content regarding meeting the needs of disabled people, appropriate behaviours, and treating customers with respect and dignity.

Complaints from Customers

The Academy has a complaints procedure in order to provide customers with an opportunity to register their views when a service has failed to live up to expectations. We welcome feedback from disabled people and believe that this ultimately helps us to deliver better services.

In the first instance customers would be advised to take up any issue with the service directly. We hope such issues can be resolved quickly at the point of service, however if this proves unsatisfactory, a formal process exists which all customers can access should they wish.

A copy of the Complaints Policy can be made available.

When dealing with a complaint we promise to:

- Act fairly, objectively and swiftly
- Keep you informed about the progress of the complaint
- Treat any information in confidence
- Explain the outcomes of the investigation
- Explain the reasons behind any final decisions

For more information on the complaints procedure and form, please contact the Principal, Red House Academy, Rutherglen Road, Sunderland. SR5 5LN.

12. Disability Equality in Schools

The law requires that all local authority maintained schools/academies must publish a Disability Equality Scheme. Secondary schools were required to do this by the 4th December 2006, primary, community special and foundation schools were all required to produce a scheme by 3rd December 2007. The Council has a role in advising schools on how to meet their legal requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005).

The Council has provided the following information to Council maintained schools/academies in Sunderland:

- Advice on how to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- Guidance and tools to produce Accessibility Plans
- Advice on how to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). This including sources of further information on how to pull together schemes and legal deadlines by which Disability Equality Schemes would need to be published.
- A range of training opportunities aimed at Headteachers, senior managers, governors, and professional groups, covering various aspects of the Disability Discrimination Acts and the additional Disability Equality Duty.

The Council will continue to provide advice and guidance to all schools regarding disability equality.

13. Every Disabled Child Matters

The Academy believes that every disabled child matters. We therefore intend to sign up to 9 commitments outlined in the national charter 'Every Disabled Child Matters' which are designed to make sure that disabled children and their families get the right support and access to services to ensure that they are fully included in society and can live ordinary lives.

1. We know how many disabled children live in our area and that all agencies are planning services based on this knowledge
2. There is a key worker service in our authority providing support to families who are accessing more than one specialist service.
3. Our parent partnership service is sufficiently resourced to provide advice, information and support to parents of disabled children and young people who have been excluded from school.
4. Parents and carers in our area are getting accurate and timely information and advice on the full range of services available to them and their families.
5. All staff have received both disability equality training, and training to ensure that they have core competencies to work with disabled children; relevant staff have received specialist training and other staff know how to contact them
6. Disabled children are involved in the drawing up of our Disability Equality Scheme and also in monitoring its effectiveness in eliminating discrimination.

7. Our Children and Young People's Plan explains how we will provide special services, and also make all universal services including extended schools and Children Centres accessible to disabled children.

8. Our Local Area Agreement includes targets for the level of service to be delivered to families with disability.

9. Disabled children and families are involved in the planning, commissioning and monitoring of services in our area.

14. Disability Equality in Employment

Equality is one of four key themes within the Academy's Human Resources Strategy. We believe that supporting all of our employees, and potential employees to acknowledge their differences and encourage them to work to their strengths, has a beneficial impact on our performance and our service delivery. We also have specific targets to meet regarding the increase of disabled people in our workforce. The targets for this year are set out below:

We have set ourselves some Equality Employment Objectives:

- To recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the local population
- To make sure our employees feel safe at work and supported to respect diversity, working in an environment where bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.
- To provide a working environment where all employees can believe that the Academy is a good place to work
- To enable all our employees to recognise and manage diversity

Disability Equality Training

The Academy has, and continues to deliver training to various levels of the workforce regarding disability equality. Content includes disability equality in the workplace, treating colleagues with respect and dignity, meeting the specific needs of customers with disability. Please see section 9 of this document.

Disability Related Harassment

The Academy will not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying from any source, including from elected members, managers, employees, customers, service users and contractors, recognising that such behaviour is unlawful. The Academy also recognises its responsibility to protect its employees from harassment during the course of their work. We will not tolerate any form of victimisation of employees who have reported harassment or given information regarding the harassment of colleagues. If it is found that harassment or victimisation has taken place, then the disciplinary procedure will be used. In the case of the perpetrator being a customer or contractor then suitable sanctions will be applied.

The harassment procedure offers employees an opportunity to seek advice regarding harassment and to register a harassment complaint. The procedure outlines each step that a victim of harassment can take, and includes the use of trained harassment advisers within the Academy and an external conciliation and mediation service.

Employee Complaints

The Academy believes that if an employee with disability has a grievance in relation to their employment it should be dealt with fairly, swiftly and ideally by the employee's line manager. Every effort will be made to deal with the issue informally where appropriate to do so. Where this is not possible the Academy's grievance procedure will be used.

If an employee feels they have witnessed anything that they believe to be inappropriate or against Academy policy, they can use the Academy's Whistle Blowing Policy to register this in confidence.

16. Gender Equality in Partnership Working

The Academy believes that equality should be an agreed principle when entering into any partnership with an outside organisation or association.

17. Monitoring Progress

The Academy has a framework to manage the Academy's performance against its priorities. In terms of equality, including disability equality we use quantitative and qualitative measures.

Quantitative Measures

We are improving disability monitoring processes across all relevant services of the Council. This is described in more detail in Sections 16 and 18 of this document. This helps us to measure disability equality improvements through gathering statistics and information on actions achieved, such as Best Value Performance Indicators for example. This information is given to senior management on a regular basis, and elected members also have a scrutiny role to play in evaluating the progress of the scheme and action plan.

Qualitative Measures

Although the above methods are useful for the Council to measure its progress, it does not necessarily provide information on whether progress is having the desired outcome of improving the quality of life of disabled people, this of course being our overall aim. So in order to measure real outcomes, we are drawing up a plan, involving disabled people, to show how disabled people will contribute to disability equality progress review.

Publishing Progress

Once a review process has been agreed, the Council will periodically publish its progress against its disability equality actions. Because of the need to continually update this information, we will use our website www.sunderland.gov.uk to publish this. It can also be presented in a variety of formats, on request, by contacting the Council's Diversity Officer, contact details on page 4 of this document.

18. Reviewing this Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan

In accordance with the law, the Council will fully review this scheme and action plan on a three yearly cycle. This will involve full consultation with disabled people in line with the approach taken for the schemes development. This is outlined in the 'Involving Disabled People in the Council's Disability Equality Scheme Plan" which is Appendix 2 of this document.

19 Disability Equality Action Plan

To support this scheme, the Council has produced an action plan outlining the specific activity we plan to do to improve disability equality. Please see Appendix 1 of this document.

Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan 2006-09

Area	Action	No	Description	Responsibility	Timescale
Corporate	Involving disabled people	1	Involve and consult a broad range of disabled people in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme including Sunderland's Disability Independent Advisory Group.	Diversity and Inclusion Team	October 2006
		2	Produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme and action plan on the Council's internet and intranet site.	Diversity and Inclusion Team Head of Communications	December 2006
		3	Annually review and evaluate progress of the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan through involvement and consultation with disabled people.	Diversity and Inclusion Team	Annually in December
Corporate	Policy and Planning	4	Achieve disability elements of the Equality standard for local government	Corporate Directors	Level 5 by March 2010
		5	Co-ordinate equality assessments (INRA) all services, functions, projects and policies for disability equality and develop action plans to remove or reduce disability inequalities	Corporate Directors	September 2007
		6	Disability equality built into corporate project planning documentation	Head of Programme and	March 2007

				Projects Office	
		7	Equality assess (INRA) Customer Services Strategy and its operation to check that the needs of disabled people are incorporated.	Customer Relationship Manager	March 2007
		8	Develop systems for gathering data and information regarding disability equality in services and employment. This including take up, usage, satisfaction and complaints by disability.	Corporate Directors Customer Feedback Manager	March 2007
		9	Report progress on all disability actions in Disability Equality Scheme	Diversity and Inclusion Team	Annually
		10	Review the Council's pricing policy for disabled people and carers using Council facilities	Diversity and Inclusion Team	September 2008
		11	Directorate Equality Plans to be produced and include service and directorate level disability equality targets and actions informed by corporate targets and outcomes of INRA	Directorates and Services	September 2007
Corporate	Procurement and Partnerships	12	Incorporate disability equality requirements into Codes of Practice for procurement, contract management and partnerships.	Corporate Procurement Manager	January 2007
		13	Explore the feasibility of developing a multi agency customer services information system that would automatically flag up information about vulnerable customers.	Diversity and Inclusion Team	March 2007
Corporate	Accessible information	14	Equality assess (INRA) the Council's Brand Toolkit and Guidance and Communications Manual to make sure disability access requirements included	Head of Corporate Communications	January 2007
Corporate	Accessible Buildings and facilities	15	Ensure that existing Council buildings, which provide a service to the public, are accessible to people with disability.	Head of Land and Property	75% of existing buildings to be made accessible by 31.3.07

		16	Assess the feasibility of having all new Council building or refurbishment plans checked by a qualified Disability Access Auditor to make sure plans meet the requirements of the DDA, not just building standard.	Head of Land and Property	March 2007
		17	Assess the feasibility of adopting the 'Changing Places' standard for accessible toilet design for all new or refurbished Council buildings.	Head of Land and Property	July 2007
Service Delivery	Leisure	18	Install monitoring to measure the use of leisure and recreational facilities and activities by disabled people.	Leisure Facilities Manager Diversity and Inclusion Team	February 2007
	Children's Services	19	Develop a comprehensive children and adolescent mental health service	Director of Children Services	Ongoing
		20	The Council to sign up to meeting the requirements of all 9 commitments of the national 'Every Disabled Child Matters' Local Authority Charter	Director of Children's Services	December 2006
		21	Increase the accessibility of school buildings and their educational facilities by achieving schools compliance with the Council's Education Accessibility Strategy	Director of Children's Services	March 2008
		22	Through consultation with City Equals, identify possible barriers for young disabled people in Sunderland. Develop an action plan in response.	Diversity and Inclusion Team Director of Children's Services	February 2008

Social Care	23	Increase the number of adults (18 to 65) supported to live at home with a physical disability, learning disability or mental health problem	Director of Adult Services	No of people per 1000 population: Physical – 5.8 Leaning – 3.1 Mental – 2.1 By March 2007	
	24	Increase the number of adults receiving direct payments.	Director of Adult Services	215 people per 100,000 population by March 2007	
	25	Decrease the number of adults (18 to 65) and older people admitted into residential or nursing care	Director of Adult Services	103 people per 10,000 population by March 2007	
	26	Decrease the number of adults (65+) admitted into residential or nursing care	Director of Adult Services	89 people per 10,000 population	
	27	Increase the diversity of people involved in Adult Services Volunteer Programme	Director of Adult Services	Ongoing increase expected	
	28	Audit of available specialist equipment to support the needs of people with specialist needs in the community	Director of Adult Services	December 2007	
	29	Audit of information available to hard to reach groups regarding adult services available	Director of Adult Services	December 2007	
	Environment	30	Equality assess (INRA) the Council's street lighting policy and its operation to check if it meets the needs of disabled people	Street Lighting Manager	March 2007
		31	Equality assess (INRA) the Council's street furniture policy and its operation to check if it meets the needs of disabled people	Highways Manager	March 2007
		32	Increase the number of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	Highways Manager	50% of crossings by March 2007 90% by March 2008

Employment and Training	Recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce	33	Develop a Workforce Diversity Plan showing how the Council intends to meet its BVPI targets and improve the diversity of the workforce including senior management level. Disabled people and local employment agencies to contribute to plan. Plan to include each agreed directorate contribution.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers Executive Management Team	Plan to be developed by May 2007. 2.6% of workforce to be disabled people by March 2007. 2.5% of senior managers to be disabled people by March 2007
		34	Carry out analysis of all gathered employment statistics to check for differences between disabled and non-disabled employees. Set targets based on outcomes.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers	October 2007
		35	Continue to increase flexible ways of working across the Council. Delivery of a pilot to check feasibility of home and mobile working, with potential benefit to employees with disability.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers	March 2007
		36	Include disability equality monitoring within Employee Survey in order to check for differences in satisfaction level between disabled and non disabled employees	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers Diversity and Inclusion Team	October 2007
		37	Put in place a method to disability equality monitor harassment where possible to do so. Check for differences between disabled and non disabled employees. Set targets based on outcomes	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers	October 2007

		38	Establish an employee group, or network of existing disabled employees for the purpose of involvement and consultation in policy writing, action planning, target setting etc.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers Diversity and Inclusion Team	March 2007
	Equality training	39	Review the Council's Workforce Equality Training Plan to check if fit for purpose to meet the requirements of equality legislation and the Equality Standard. Plan to cover all employees and elected members	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers Diversity and Inclusion Team	February 2007
	Accessible policies and procedures	40	Make all employment policies and procedures accessible by including accessibility requirements and using language appropriate to the audience.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers	September 2007
	Equality in appraisal	41	Review Appraisal process to check if fit for purpose to meet the requirements of equality legislation and the Equality Standard.	Employee Relations Manager Diversity and Inclusion Team	October 2007
	Providing Placements	42	Examine the possibility of joining the Sunderland Learning Disability Placement Scheme run by City Hospital's.	Employee Relations Manager Directorate HR Managers	September 2008

Involving and Consulting Disabled People Plan on the Council's Disability Equality Scheme Plan

It is not only a legal requirement to involve disabled people in the development of a Disability Equality Scheme, but it also makes very good sense. Organisations can have a tendency to think they know best, but when it comes to identifying and meeting the needs of disabled people, then disabled people themselves really are the experts.

Who do we mean by Disabled People

We firstly need to clarify who we mean by 'disabled people'. This does not only mean disabled adults, children and young people can have disability too. So, with the help of the Council's Children's Services Directorate, we have been able to include young disabled people in the development of this Disability Equality Scheme. We also have further plans to make links with disabled children and their parents, so that we can understand and capture thoughts and feelings in relation to their unique view of disability.

Forming the Disability Equality Partnership

In Sunderland it was believed that partner organisation may well be able to work together when engaging and involving disabled people in the development of schemes. Sunderland City Council, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust, Sunderland City Hospitals, Northumbria Police and Sunderland Mental Health Trust therefore agreed to work in partnership to establish links with disabled people across Sunderland, hoping to involve them in the development of their organisation's Disability Equality Schemes. Equality specialist from the above mentioned organisations met in summer 2006 to discuss this. The organisations agreed that it could be more productive to work together when engaging disabled people and it was felt that local disabled people may appreciate this joined up and less repetitive approach. So it was decided that the Equality Partnership Group would be formed.

Where would the Partnership Start?

It's true that at this point the individual organisations had already given a lot of thought to the development of their schemes, but it was agreed that pen would not be put to paper until disabled people had been asked how they would like schemes to be developed. In fact it was agreed that firstly disabled people should be asked if they valued the joined up approach of the partnership. It was believed that this was giving real power to local disabled people from the outset, and would become meaningful involvement from the start rather than after thought consultation.

Agreeing a way of working

The partnership members then decided to spend some time agreeing to some principles that would apply when proceeding with engaging disabled people. The following principles were agreed:

- making sure disabled people were involved from the start, even in deciding how to approach and engaging disabled people.
- checking that disabled people representing disabled groups were actually communicating with those groups and not simply speaking for them.
- Checking all disabled groups were included, and if not, making sure they were approached separately.
- making sure language, documentation, presentations, facilities etc were all accessible and user friendly.
- wherever possible partners would work together to respond to issues raised by disabled people – e.g. joint action plans

Sunderland's Disability Independent Advisor Group (DIAG)

The next thing for the partnership was to decide who to involve. It was agreed that in the first instance it would be useful to approach an umbrella organisation representing many disability groups. Coincidentally at the same time the Sunderland Local Strategic Partnership had agreed to establish an independent advisory group for disabled people. The purpose of this group being proposed as bringing together a more representative group of disabled people and providing a more powerful link into local public decision making. This seemed like the perfect place to start involving disabled people.

What would be taken to the initial meeting with Disabled People

It was believed that although the detail of schemes would probably vary between organisations, it was likely that the overall structure and main content of schemes would be similar across the partner organisations. Therefore a very broad potential content list was generated by the partners as well as a list of the possible stages for disabled people to be involved. This was taken to the first meeting with disabled people. The content was agreed and it was suggested by disabled people that organisations write a first draft of their schemes to bring back to the DIAG. It was suggested that the part of development of schemes that interested disabled people more was the creation of the associated action plans. At this stage it was also agreed that disabled people wished to be involved in more than just the development of schemes, but wanted to be involved in evaluating organisations progress against their schemes. So a further event with the DIAG was organised to agree an evaluation and review process for the future.

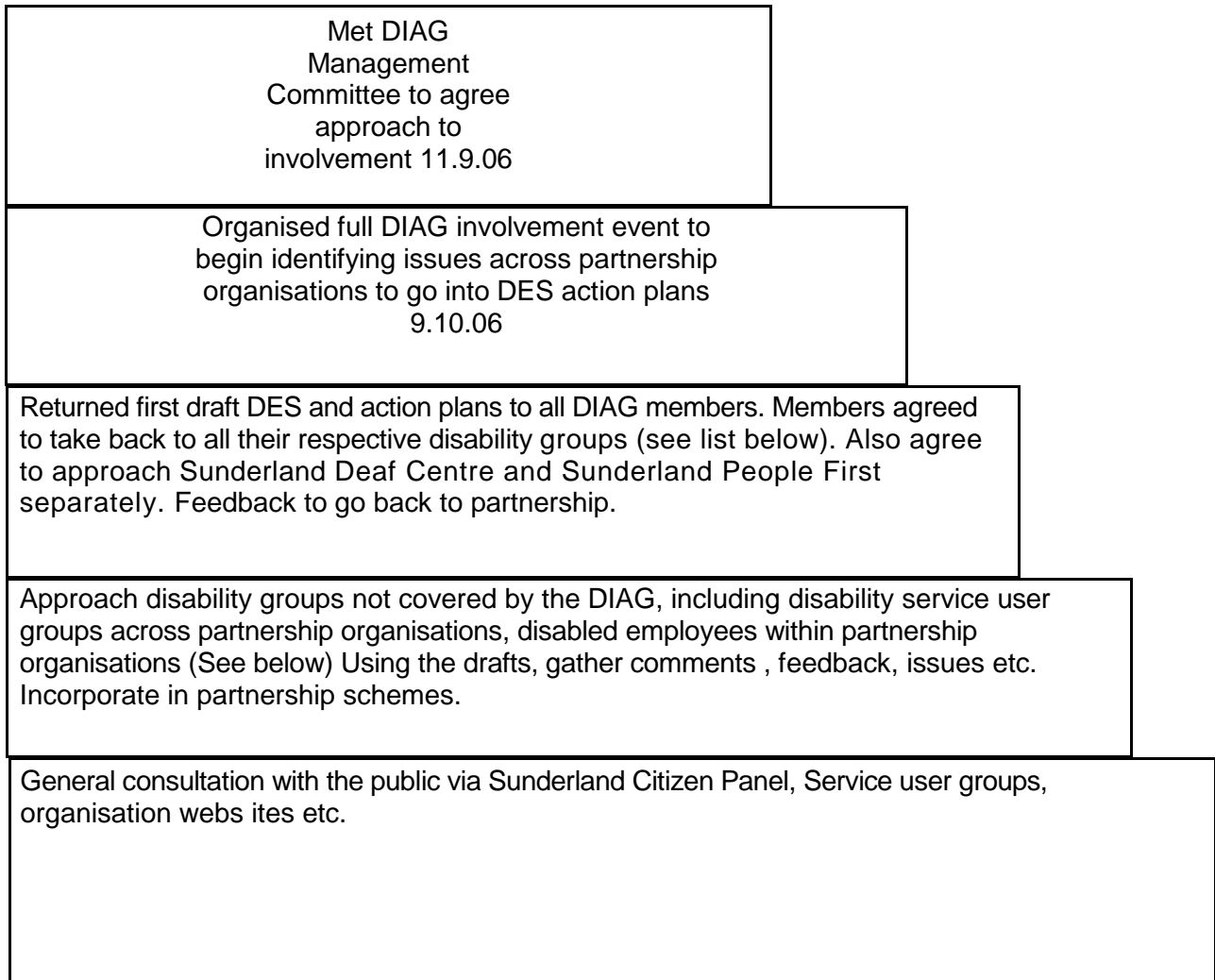
Following the outcomes of this event the partners agreed to write individual schemes for their respective organisations, however they would work closely together to cross reference content and actions so that all the schemes were compatible and joined up.

Wide Involvement of Disabled People

It was agreed by the partners that the involvement of disabled people would need to be a lot broader than just using the DIAG members, although this was a great start. The following diagram shows the levels of involvement and consultation that the partnership planned to do. Some levels have been carried out and others will be arranged over the coming months. It was felt that it was important to fit involvement and consultation into the programme of meetings disabled people had organised themselves rather than asking disabled people to come to consultation events ran by the partners.

It was understood that not all involvement and consultation would have been completed before the legal deadline of 4th December 2006. This being the date by which organisation must have their schemes published. The partnership believed that involving disabled people in the development and improvement of schemes would be an ongoing and continuous process. If schemes and their action plans are being progressed within organisations, they would, in effect, never be 'finished products', constantly being updated and amended. Therefore although each organisation would publish their schemes on or before the legal date, this would not prevent the continuation of involvement of disabled people in the improvement and development of schemes and their action plans. In fact it was felt that the publicising of schemes would provide the opportunity to further consult with the wider public to gain the views of disabled people not involved or represented by a specific disability group.

Diagram showing Involvement and Consultation with Disabled People that has been carried out or planned.



List of disability groups or organisations involved with, or consulted on, the development of this Disability Equality Scheme

Sunderland Disability Independent Advisory Group – Management Committee
Sunderland Disability Independent Advisory Group – Full
Sunderland People First
Physical Disabilities Alliance
Sunderland Council for the Disabled
Wearable
Sunderland and South Tyneside ME/CSF Support Group
Bridge Project
University of Sunderland – Professor Alan Roulstone
PIE
Headlight
Compass Community Transport
Soundwaves
North Durham Society for the Blind
City Equal's
Sunderland City Council disabled employees
Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust disabled employees
Sunderland City Hospitals disabled employees
Sunderland Mental Health Trust disabled employees
Northumbria Police disabled employees
City Hospital Cancer Patient Group
City Hospital HIV Patient Group
Sunderland Citizen Panel
BME Male Patient Group

Trade Unions:

NUT
ASCL
NASUWT
NAHT
A T L
GMB
UNISON
AEP
ASPECT

Equality Assessment Template (INRA)

It is important to make sure you are, or have planned all that is necessary to meet the needs of all different types of customers. This template helps you to do that by allowing you to equality check a service, function or major project. The law requires such checks to be carried out in order to identify any potential inequalities or barriers that could be discriminatory. It is not sufficient to presume everything is ok, the Council is now expected to test and be able to demonstrate equality in everything it does.

When should you complete this assessment?

When any of the following is correct:

- A new service, function, major project or policy is being planned
- An existing service, function, major project or policy has not yet been assessed or is significantly changing
- Information from consultation, equality data, complaints or another source suggests a possible equality issue relating to the service, function, major project or policy
- An existing service, function, major project or policy has not been checked for three years.

Please read the guidance notes associated with this template.

Briefly describe the service, function, or project being assessed. If you are assessing a document but are not directly responsible for its delivery i.e. a corporate policy or strategy, please go to section 5.	
Title of any strategy, policy, procedure or plan related to the service, function or project being assessed	
Please state why you are doing this INRA (pick from list above).	

Section 1 Aim of Service, Function or Project

1	What is the overall aim of the service, function or project, what are you ultimately trying to achieve?	
2	Is this compatible with the principles of equality, access and inclusion as outlined in the Council's Corporate Equality Plan? Briefly describe how.	
3	Give a broad description of what is being done or planned to help deliver the above aim. How is or will equality be promoted throughout this? Please give brief details.	
4	Who will receive or benefit from this service, function or project? Please list any groups or types of people more likely to be affected than others.	
Section 2 Delivering the Service, Function or project		
5	Does the delivery of the service, function or project require you to interact with the public? If yes, please explain the circumstances. Broadly when, how and where does or will this happen?	
6	When interacting with the public, have the needs of different people been provided for or planned? Please explain, see guidance notes and attached Example Barrier Sheet to help with this. Mark any gaps you believe may exist and state any actions to be taken or planned to correct this. If you need help with this, please mark this and see guidance notes.	
7	Have all of the staff interacting with the public received appropriate equality training? If so, give brief details of what was provided and when. If not, mark this as an action.	

8	If you are assessing a new or planned service, function or project, please skip this question. Otherwise give brief details of any feedback or complaints received regarding equality issues in the delivery of the service, function or project. If action has been taken or planned to address issues, please give details. If barriers are unavoidable please explain why. If a response still needs to be identified or consultation is required to further understand issues, mark this as an action.	
Section 3 Equality Data and Information Gathering		
9	How is, or will, success be measured in relation to the aim stated in question 1?	
10	Can or will success be measured broken down by race, gender, disability, age, religion and sexuality? If yes to any, please give details of how this information is collected. If it is not appropriate or possible to collect this information, please explain why. If this information can be collected but isn't or has not been planned, mark this as an action.	
11	Please explain what happens to any information collected, or what you plan to do with the information. If nothing, mark this as an action and see guidance notes.	
12	If you are assessing a planned service, function or project, please go to question 16. Otherwise does the analysis show any differences or gaps for different groups? Please see guidance notes. If yes, please describe.	
13	Explain what has been done or planned to reduce the gap. If differences are unavoidable please explain why. If action may be possible but not yet taken or planned, mark as an action.	
Section 4 Consultation		

14	If a gap has been identified in question 12, explain the cause. If the cause is not clear, has consultation been carried out or planned to help identify the cause, please give details of this. If you believe consultation is not necessary or possible, explain why. If consultation is necessary to identify cause of gap, but none has happened or is planned, mark this as an action and see guidance notes.	
15	Has the reason for the gap or trend been identified? If yes give details of cause. If consultation has not identified cause of gap, please see guidance notes.	
16	If a new service, function or project is being planned, give details of any consultation carried out or planned to make sure the service, function or project intends to meet requirements of all intended to benefit, those identified in questioned 4. If not, consultation may be required. Mark this as an action and see guidance notes.	
17	Have any actions been carried out or planned as a result of consultation outcomes. If no action possible, please explain why.	
18	Have the details of any consultation done or planned been recorded on the Council's Consultation Database? If not mark this as an action and see guidance notes.	

Section 5 Community Relations

19	Could there be any reason why the planned or existing service, function, project or document may be perceived as benefiting some more than others, or having a negative effect on some? If yes, please explain. Give details of anything been done or planned to offset this. If nothing can be done please explain why. If something can be done or consultation required, please mark as an action.	
20	Do you have any reason to believe that this could possibly lead to tensions between different groups or individuals in our community? If yes, please explain	

	and see guidance notes. Have you planned or done anything in anticipation of this?	
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Section 6 Documentation

21	<p>Do any associated policies, strategies, project plans or procedures include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The overall aim of the policy, strategy or plan - Who it is intended to benefit? -How it is compatible with the Council’s Corporate Equality Plan in principle. - How in practice it will meet the different needs of all who are intended to benefit and promote equality. -How consultation has, or will, be carried out and whom it will include? Please see guidance notes. -How equality data and information will be collected, broken down by different groups, monitored and used. Please see guidance notes. <p>If any of the above are not included please explain why, or please mark as an action to include.</p>	
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22	Is the document available to the public? If so, is the document accessible and user friendly, and does it contain details on how to arrange for it to be produced in different format? Please see guidance notes. If not, please mark as an action.	
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Section 7 Action to be taken forward

Skim through your answers above for any marked actions or issues. Discuss these with any other relevant officers, and agree the specifics of actions to be taken forward, including deadlines and responsibility. Mark this below. If you are unsure about any of the questions or actions to be taken forward, please contact your directorate Equality Representative, see guidance notes for contact details.

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Next Steps:

1. Sign and date below and then forward this template to your Directorate Equality Rep (see guidance notes for names), so that they can collate the equality actions for the your Directorate's Equality Action Plan
2. When this is returned and signed by them, forward this to your line manager if approval is needed for any actions in section 7.
3. Transfer actions over to relevant service plans
4. Progress the agreed actions and report progress to your line manager and the Directorate Equality Rep when required.

Name, signature and job title of person carrying out this assessment	Date:
Names and signatures of any others involved in the assessment, and their relevance	Date:
Name and signature of Directorate Equality Representative checking this assessment. See guidance Notes	Date:
Name and signature of Head of Service giving approval for actions listed in Section 7	Date:

If you require a copy of this policy in an alternative format such as Braille, large print, audio tape or in another language, please contact a member of the Diversity Team on 0191 553 1742

[e-mail: dawnp.rugman@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:dawnp.rugman@sunderland.gov.uk)

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