Accessibility Policy

Approved on	**20th July 2026**
Approved by	**Board of Trustees**
Next Review Date	**16th July 2029**

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
10.07.25	JPT	No change
15/07/26	JPT	Terminology changes.

Date of next review: 15/07/29

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Mission Statement

Based on a model scheme for schools created by Lisa Belletty, lbelletty@lambeth.gov.uk

At Essex and Thames SCITT, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices and staff. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in the SCITT. The achievement of disabled Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners or apprentices will be monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure an inclusive programme. We will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that the SCITT environment is as accessible as possible. At Essex and Thames we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. The first point of contact for trainees with disabilities is their personal tutors who will then inform the SCITT wellbeing lead so that all necessary adjustments can be made if possible.

Checklist for SCITT leaders

✓ Is information collected on disability with regards to both Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners or apprentices and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?

✓ Are Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners achievements monitored by disability? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?

✓ Are disabled Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners or apprentices encouraged to participate fully in SCITT life? How is this shown through representation in SCITT events such as QI committees and representation at management group meetings?

✓ Is bullying and harassment of disabled Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?

✓ Is disability portrayed positively in displays and discussions?

✓ Is equality and inclusion regularly referenced in the taught course?

✓ Is the SCITT environment as accessible as possible to Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices and staff?

✓ Is information available to Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices and staff in formats that are accessible if required? Is everyone aware of this?

The Disability Equality Duty (DED)

The Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general duty on schools, who need to have due regard for the following when carrying out their functions:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
- Eliminating harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

This is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED) and applies to all disabled Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices and staff.

Monitoring

To meet the Disability Equality Duty, it is essential that aspects of SCITT life are monitored to identify whether there is an adverse impact on Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners, apprentices or staff with disabilities. The following should be monitored:

- Achievement of Trainees, Apprentices or Practitioners or apprentices by disability
- Disabled staff (including numbers, type of disability and satisfaction rates in staff surveys etc.)

The role of Essex and Thames Education as an employer

Part 2 of the Disability Equality Duty (DDA) says that it is unlawful for employers to discriminate against disabled employees and disabled people who apply for a job. As an employer we will:

- Treat a disabled employee or applicant as we would treat any other employee or applicant. There will be no direct discrimination based on a person's disability.
- Take reasonable steps to avoid placing a disabled employee or applicant at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustments duty'). We will make a reasonable adjustment whenever necessary or possible.
- Never treat a disabled employee or applicant less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification ('disability-related discrimination').

Monitoring and reporting

It is important 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.

The actions outlined in the action plan will be monitored in accordance with the specified timescales. If any adverse impacts are identified during the monitoring process, the action plan will need to be revised.

An annual report will be produced which outlines the progress of the Disability Equality Scheme and assesses the implementation of the action plan for effectiveness. This report will be circulated to Headteachers and Governors and the findings will be used to improve the Disability Equality Scheme and feed into future practice.