

Early Years Foundation Stage and the Disability Discrimination Act

The EYFS framework is a single framework for care, learning and development for all children, including those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties from birth to five.

A Unique Child

Identifying who the disabled children are, and understanding and addressing their needs



Positive Relationships

Integrated working with parents, health and social partners and linking with Early Support



Enabling Environments

Working together with partners to devise a planned approach to removing barriers, sharing and combining resources to give the child a positive start to development and education



Learning and Development

Working with parents and LAs to ensure that plans are in place for continued access to learning and development on transition between settings

Identifying disabled children in the setting

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities affecting either:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination, continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech;
- hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; and/or
- perception of risk of physical danger.

Early Support

Early Support is a government programme to improve quality, consistency and coordination of services for young disabled children and their families. It is targeted at families with children under five with additional support needs associated with disability or emerging special educational needs. The programme promotes partnership working with families which can be applied across the age range.

Statutory Requirements

All schools have duties under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 to:

- not treat disabled children 'less favourably'; and
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled children.

The duties under Part 3 of the DDA 1995 also place similar obligations on all services and early years settings that are not schools (such as nurseries, children centres and pre-school provision, including playgroups and childminders).

The SEN Code of Practice (CoP) helps early education settings, schools and LAs meet their responsibilities for children with special educational needs.

Ensuring that your setting meets the requirement

- Be aware and understand who your disabled children are;
- Assess the impact of your provision for access to learning and development for disabled children in your setting;
- Work with parents, health and social partners to support the child's development;
- Set out a priority plan such as Early Years Action Plan and Action Plan Plus which tailors support for the disabled child;
- Ensure plans are in place for transition either to another setting or to Key Stage 1, working with parents, setting/school and the local authority.

Engaging local authority support

- You may want to contact your local Area SENCo or Early Years Consultant to establish what training, support and resources are available.

Resources

Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Schools and Early Years Settings

– www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/disability/

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 – www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/ukpga_19950050_en_1

Code of Practice – www.teachernet.gov.uk/sen

Early Support Programme – www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/ahdc/earllysupport/home/