



Disability Equality Policy

General

SMT recognises that the school must take positive action to prohibit all forms of illegal discrimination. This obligation is towards staff, pupils and others associated with the school (e.g. parents; users of the premises; visitors). SMT aims not to treat disabled people using the school's services less favourably than able people as far as is reasonably practicable.

In preparing and developing the Policy, SMT will have regard to any national guidance and any guidance from the local authority.

Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 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'.

- 'physical impairment' includes sensory impairments;
- 'mental impairment' includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;
- 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial';
- 'long term' is defined as 12 months or more.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term as defined above.

The Disability Discrimination Act also covers those with:

- severe disfigurements;
- impairments controlled or corrected by the use of
 - medication;
 - prostheses;
 - an aid or otherwise;
- progressive symptomatic conditions;

- a history of impairment; and children under the age of 6 with impairments which, in an older person, would result in that person being covered.

Since December 2005 persons with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are also covered at the point of diagnosis.

But **excluded** are those with:
an addiction to or dependency on:

- nicotine;
- tobacco; or
- other non-prescribed drugs or substances;
- seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever); and
- certain mental illnesses with anti-social consequences.

SMT's Duty

SMT will discharge its responsibilities towards disabled staff, pupils and those using the school's services by ensuring that disabled people are not treated less favourably in the following aspects as relevant:

- accessibility to the premises and facilities;
- accessibility to the curriculum;
- accessibility of associated educational services;
- training of staff and pupils;

The school's policy is 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; and
- take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favorable treatment.

Accessibility Plans

SMT's Accessibility Plan follows national and LA guidelines and aims to:

- enable disabled staff to have reasonable access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable the needs of disabled visitors to the site are taken into account;
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- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school in order to enable disabled pupils to take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

Unlawful Discrimination

The school will ensure that discrimination is prohibited in:

- the selection and appointment and promotion arrangements for staff;
- staff conditions of service;
- staff training;
- the arrangements for determining pupil admission;
- the terms on which admission is offered;
- refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an admission application;
- provision of education or associated services (including educational visits and extra-curricular activities);
- exclusions;
- victimisation and harassment;
- failing to take steps to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled pupils in the arrangements for determining admission to school and in relation to the provision of education and associated services. However, alterations to buildings and the provision of auxiliary aids and services are not required under this law.

Pupils:

The school values the full range of its students and seeks to ensure that its practices are fully inclusive. Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled pupils, while bearing in mind the interests of other pupils. The school is required to make, under the terms of SENDDA 2001:

- improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled students;
- physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra-curricular activities); and
- improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled students.

There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not students with behaviour issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following may be underlying reasons for poor behaviour:

- mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy.

(N.B. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act. Other school policies cover these areas.)

The School will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled pupils in the school.

Education and Associated Services

For pupils:

- preparation for entry to the school;
- the curriculum;
- teaching and learning;
- classroom organisation;
- timetabling;
- grouping;
- homework;
- access to school facilities;
- activities that supplement the curriculum e.g. a drama group visiting the school;
- school sports;
- school policies;
- breaks and lunchtimes;
- serving school meals;
- interaction with peers;
- assessment and examination arrangements;
- discipline and sanctions;
- exclusion procedures;
- school clubs and activities;
- educational visits;
- arrangements for working with other agencies;
- preparation for the next phase of education;
- administration of medicines;
- first aid.

The Scheme

Aims

Staff:

The school aims, within the constraints of resources available, to ensure that no member of staff with disabilities is less favourably treated in the school's procedures and practices in respect of:

- recruitment, performance management, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the premises.

Pupils:

The school aims, within the constraints of resources available, to enable each pupil to fulfil his/her potential, within an educational programme that has development of the whole person at its core.

The school aims to fulfil the requirements of the legislation to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the school premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

The school will examine each disability case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate a disabled pupil's needs.

The first part of the programme of access should then set out how the school identifies staff and pupils with disabilities, records and reviews them. It will include a note on the risk assessments that should be carried out on behalf of disabled staff, pupils and visitors, and who is responsible for them.

The school's programme of access should then set out how disabled pupils' needs in each of the identified areas are actually provided for by the school. There will be a need for a similar list for staff and 'visitors', setting out what steps the school actually takes. (IEP).

The SENCO will have overall responsibility for managing the student's programme of access and the HR Manager will have overall responsibility for managing the staff programme of access. The SENCO will be supported by an LSA to assist with recording and issuing Individual Education Plan (IEP). Both SENCO and HR Manager will report to the Head Teacher.

The School actively ensures that the programme of access that is implemented for each student takes accounts of the following headings; monitored daily by teaching staff and tutors, SENCO has the responsibility of reviewing programmes of access on a termly basis.:

- 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.

Premises

The school recognises that through the provisions of SENDDA it is not required to provide 'auxiliary aids' (i.e. special equipment or additional personal support), nor make 'physical alterations to the buildings, (such as provide lifts).

However, to meet its obligations, the school will ensure that the needs of disabled staff and pupils are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the school campus.

The school will budget annually for reasonable minor adjustments to the environment to enable a member of staff and/or a pupil with a disability to have access to the full teaching and learning of the school.

The school will bear in mind health and safety requirements and the interests of other pupils in all the above considerations.

Discrimination in Admissions

SMT will ensure that disabled pupils are not discriminated against:

through the criteria they determine for admission to the school, including criteria used where the school is oversubscribed; and
by refusing, or deliberately not accepting, an application from a disabled person for admission to the school.

Action on Transfer into the School

At transfer to the school, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled pupils and their families to ensure that the pupil's educational needs and this school's requirements are fully understood by staff at the feeder school, parents, and pupil, and to ensure that the transfer process is effective.

Teaching

Staff:

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a regular basis.

Where necessary, support staff time will be allocated, relevant to the disabled member of staff's needs.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff.

Within the constraints of financial resources the school aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to teach effectively.

Pupils:

In all teaching and learning activities a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no pupil is excluded from learning.

Teaching staff will be given, as relevant, advice from appropriate external agencies regarding the learning needs of disabled pupils, (such as the Sensory Impairment Service).

Off-site Activities

The school will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that pupils and staff with disabilities are given access to off-site activities organised by the school.

Harassment

The school values each member of staff for their contribution to the school and will seek to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable no member of staff is disadvantaged by reason of his/her disability.

SMT will take positive action against any employee's harassment of another employee. All employees have a duty not to harass other employees on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognised by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Head (or in the case of harassment by the Head, to the Human Resources Manager).

Liaison with Parents

SMT will report to parents annually, during academic Review day on:

- the Accessibility Plan;
- how SMT helps students with disability gain access to the curriculum;
- what SMT does to ensure fair treatment for disabled students.

The school will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all students with disability through the provision of designated staff members with allocated time and effective communication skills.

Whenever appropriate, information to home is provided in different formats to take account of disability.

Under the supervision of a senior member of staff with delegated responsibility, staff with pastoral responsibility will liaise closely with the homes of students who exhibit behavioural difficulties to determine whether they arise from disability or from domestic or social circumstances. They will report to the senior member of staff who will determine, after consultation, appropriate action.

The School, at least annually, will remind parents of the school's Complaints Procedure

Timetable for Making and Implementing the Scheme

Parents / Carers to be advised at Academic Review Days.

Training

Appropriate training for staff and pupils will be included in an annual programme. In the case of pupils there will be units in appropriate areas of the national curriculum and in the PSHE programme.

Staff Training

Annual training will be given to senior staff to ensure understanding of the DDA and SENDDA and how actions at school level may be undertaken to ensure inclusion of disabled members of staff and pupils.

All staff (teaching and support staff) must attend training regarding duties to disabled members of staff and pupils under the DDA and SENDDA, and to attend up-dating sessions when deemed necessary by the Head.

All teaching staff have at least annual training regarding improved practice in differentiation for all pupils including those with disability.

Regular staff training will be undertaken regarding the needs for learning of particular disabled pupils.

Support staff working with disabled members of staff and pupils will be given relevant training.

Responsibilities

Senior Management Team (SMT)

The governing body has established an Equal Opportunities Committee to:

- oversee the implementation of all the school's policies and practices in this area, including Disability Inclusion;
- consider what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made;
- make recommendations to the Head with a view to improving access to teaching and learning;
- consider the school's systems and procedures for making staff, parents and pupils aware of the policies;
- consider the school's Accessibility Plan; and
- review the Plan annually.

Head's Responsibility

- to oversee the implementation of the policy and Scheme;
- to report progress as required to SMT
- Staff:
 - the Head will report to SMT at least annually on members of staff who have a disability, and the steps taken to ensure that they are not treated less favourably;
- the Head will report annually on the training provided for staff.

Pupils:

- the Head will report to SMT on activities that ensure that reasonable adjustments have been identified and implemented;
- the Head will ensure that the Disabled Pupils Accessibility Plan has reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to SMT;
- the Head will ensure that regular liaison with parents of disabled pupils takes place. Reports on these meetings and any correspondence with parents and pupils regarding their disabilities will be contained in the Head's reports to SMT.

Monitoring, Inspection and Review

SMT will ensure that the working of the Programme of Access and Accessibility Plan is monitored. The Head is required to report on progress annually.

SMT recognise that these duties are monitored by OFSTED for England through their inspections.



Review

The policy will be reviewed and revised triennially by SMT, or sooner if there is a clear need.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection
- Behaviour Management
- Positive Handling
- Anti-bullying
- Admissions
- Exclusion
- Health and Safety
- Student Code of Conduct
- Teaching & Learning Policy
- Promoting Racial Equality Policy
- Every Child Matters
- SEN
- Equal Opportunities

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