

Disability and Accessibility Policy

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The aims of this policy

To afford opportunity to employees and pupils who are disabled

To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)

To have regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights

The culture and ethos of the Academy

Wave aims to provide an environment in which people are valued and respected as individuals, regardless of ethnic origin, gender, ability or disability. Through meeting and mixing with a wide range of abilities and needs, students learn to accept and see beyond individual differences and to value what each person has to offer.

Policy Statement

Wave will:

- maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the Academy
- train staff to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with employees and pupils who are disabled
- Where medication is required, it will be administered in accordance with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Difficulties Policy
- adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions applications for disabled children, and consult with referrers about the reasonable adjustments which can be made to ensure that the admissions process is accessible for the child
- implement and review the Accessibility Plans with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the curriculum, improving the physical environment of the Academy and improving access to information for our employees, pupils and prospective pupils and their parents
- keep under review the Academy's Admissions Arrangements, Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying Policies

Disability

A person has a disability if he or she 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 activity (Equality Act 2010).

By way of further explanation:

- physical disability includes medical conditions for which a person needs to use a wheelchair, for example, cerebral palsy or brittle bones
- a mental impairment is a recognised mental illness which has been diagnosed, a severe learning difficulty or a psychiatric illness
- "long-term" means a period of 12 months or longer

Other conditions which may amount to disability include:

- severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks (but not including tattoos or piercings)
- progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity
- a controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a prosthesis, or a person with drug controlled epilepsy or diabetes
- a history of impairment, for example a person who used to be disabled and has recovered, for example, a person with a previous mental illness

Disability does not include:

- hay fever sufferers
- a person with anti-social tendencies
- a person who has a behavioural difficulty, for a reason other than a disability, for example, arising from social or domestic circumstances
- a person who is addicted to nicotine, alcohol and other non-prescribed substances unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment

Discrimination

We will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures
- in the terms on which a place at the School is offered
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment
- in the provision of education and associated services
- in the way the School affords access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the School
- by excluding a person on the grounds of his or her disability
- by harassing a person with a disability
- by victimising a person with a disability
- by failing to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled persons

Admissions procedure for pupils

The Academy will be open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment. Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's Admissions Arrangements Policy.

The admissions forms will enable parents to give details of their child's disability, and the Academy will treat every application from a disabled child in a fair, open-minded way.

The Academy will, if appropriate, request from the parents and previous School full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the child's disability so that the Academy can make an assessment of the reasonable adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs.

Applications will be considered on the basis that all Reasonable Adjustments have been made by the Academy in order to cater for the child's disability (see definition below). The Academy will not offer a place if, after all Reasonable Adjustments have been made, the Academy will not be able to provide adequately or appropriately for the child's physical and educational needs. The Academy will inform the parents of their decision and give details of the Reasonable Adjustments they are prepared to make or give reasons why the offer of a place will not be made.

Education and associated services

The Academy has an ongoing duty to make Reasonable Adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided by the School. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life. The range of activities that are covered by the expression include:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling (including sports)
- access to school facilities
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the serving of school meals
- assessment and examination arrangements
- school discipline and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, educational visits and other activities
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education

The Academy is not legally required to make adjustments which include:

- physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, such as a new library

The Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". We will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

Reasonable adjustments for the public

The School may provide services to the public, for example at:

- open days
- parents' evenings
- concerts and plays
- exhibitions
- conferences
- use of sports facilities

Where a physical feature (for example steps, entrances, exits, toilet facilities) makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to access the service, schools are required to take reasonable steps to:

- remove the feature; or
- alter it so it no longer has that effect; or

- provide reasonable means of avoiding the feature; or
- provide a reasonable alternative method of making the service available

Where an Auxiliary Aid or Service would enable a disabled person to make use of a service, schools are required to take reasonable steps to provide it. An Auxiliary Aid or Service could be something as simple as extra assistance from a member of staff or a large print sign, or it might be a temporary ramp where steps are preventing wheelchair access.

Accessibility Plans

Physical environment

Our sites are accessible to wheelchairs. The majority of classrooms and dining halls allow wheelchair access, and should it be necessary, adjustments to the school timetable will be made. All rooms are equipped with appropriate lighting.

Glynn House AP Academy does not have disabled toilet facilities, so students may be educated at other establishments within the Trust.

Teaching and learning practices

Individual education plans (IEPs) are drawn up in accordance with SEN policy, which detail arrangements for individual students according to need, eg seating position, colour of whiteboard marker, enlargement of texts, style of delivery, translators at key meetings for those parents and carers whose home language is other than English.

Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are drawn up in accordance with DfES guidance on access to education for children and young people with medical needs, for young people with a long term or recurring medical condition, which detail the condition, the medical professionals involved, information about the condition, special arrangements etc for the young person.

Information on specific disabilities is disseminated to teaching staff to ensure and reinforce understanding of particular conditions and their effects. Extra time is provided where appropriate for completion of work. Teaching staff are reminded of less obvious effects of disabilities.

It is sometimes useful, with the student's agreement, for the disability to be discussed with the class (in a whole class setting or with groups or selected individuals), so that they understand the implications. For example, peers of hearing impaired students need to know the effect of extraneous noise on amplification systems, peers of autistic students may need to understand the reasons for some of their actions.

The SENCO is responsible for making special access arrangements for students sitting examinations. The SENCO makes applications for special exam arrangements and makes and supervises these (often complex) arrangements, for which personal knowledge and understanding of the student's special needs is essential, as well as detailed knowledge and understanding of the various modifications to papers and provision for special needs by the different exam boards.

A designated teacher works closely with the higher education careers adviser and with students making the transition to higher education.

Staff training

This Accessibility Policy is approved by the Executive Committee, who take overall responsibility for its implementation.

It is the responsibility of the Principals to provide information and training for staff on the provisions of SEN and Disability Act (2001) and its implications.

Meetings involving staff involved with particular students take place on a regular basis, both formal and informal.

Information and advice relating to particular disabilities (eg autism/Asperger's, physical disabilities, visual and hearing impairment, ADHD and dyslexia) is circulated as appropriate with ILPs and at other times as needed.

Successful inclusion is dependent on the knowledge, skills and understanding of teachers, so information and guidance needs to be consistently reinforced and updated through an ongoing process of training, information sharing, guidance on ILPs etc.

Non physical barriers to inclusion

We have recently given more thought to non-physical barriers to inclusion. These mainly affect students with an invisible disability, very commonly those on medication for various conditions. Young people suffering from depression, schizophrenia, tourettes syndrome and ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder) are commonly prescribed medication, some of which has an extremely debilitating effect. Antipsychotic drugs (the prescription of which is not confined to those with psychotic disorders) commonly result in extreme lethargy, weight gain and difficulties with concentration and organisation. Students taking medication and students with particular conditions, e.g. Asperger's syndrome and dyspraxia, may find it very hard to arrive on time for classes and with the correct equipment. Support for them consists of regular telephone calls and texts to remind them of times and places where they should be, liaison with their teachers, provision of water at breaks and contact with medical professionals and the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

In the case of these students, as for students with any disability, the behaviour policy is differentiated to take account of the effects of the disability or medication that has been prescribed. Rules pertaining to punctuality, for example, may need to be dis-applied if the inability to arrive on time on a regular basis is either a symptom of the disability or an effect of the medication.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually.