

The Nelson Thomlinson Disability Equality Policy

Mission Statement

The Nelson Thomlinson School will work to promote a positive attitude to disability by enabling all people involved in the school community to contribute to and gain full access to all activities.

The Definition of Disability is:

“A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

Physical or mental impairment can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also covers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on students' everyday lives.

The Governing Body's Duty

The Governing Body will discharge its responsibilities towards staff, students and those using the school's services by ensuring that people with a disability 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 students;

The school's policy is to:

- promote equality and opportunity
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability
- encourage people with a disability to participate in public life; and
- take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment.

Accessibility Plans

The school's Accessibility Plan follows the local authority's guidelines and aims, as far as is reasonably practicable to:

- ensure staff with a disability to have access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- ensure that the needs of visitors with a disability are taken into account;
- increase the extent to which students with a disability can participate in the school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school in order to enable students with a disability to take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to students with a disability, 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 students 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 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 students with a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with all other students 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.

Students:

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 students with a disability, while bearing in mind the interests of other students. The school is required to make, under the terms of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act (SENDDA) 2001:

- improvements in access to the curriculum for students with a disability;
- physical improvement 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 students with a disability.

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 for poor behaviour:

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

(NB Behaviour difficulties arising from social and/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 students with a disability in the school.

Education and Associated Services

For students these will be deemed to include:

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

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.

Students

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

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

The school will examine each disability case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate the needs of students with a disability.

Students with a disability are identified through the completion of student detail forms by parents/carers prior to admission. In addition the SENCO gathers relevant information on students with a disability through regular liaison visits to feeder schools prior to transfer. Relevant information is made available to all staff via the SEN Register, which is regularly updated. As appropriate, Individual Education Plans are completed, usually by the SENCO and her team. Progress is monitored to assess whether or not further adjustments/new measures are necessary.

Premises

The school recognises that it is not required to provide 'auxiliary aids' (ie special equipment or additional 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 staff and students with a disability are full considered in strategic planning for the development of the school campus.

When determining the priorities for the use of the annual Capital Grant, the school will take into account the need to make the school campus more accessible for staff and students with a disability.

The school will budget annually for reasonable minor adjustment to the environment to enable a member of staff and/or student 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 students in all the above considerations.

Discrimination in Admissions

The Governing Body will ensure that students with a disability 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 person with a disability for admission to the school.

Action on Transfer into the School

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

TEACHING & LEARNING

Staff

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

Where necessary, support staff time will be allocated, relevant to the needs of the member of staff with a disability.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of members of staff with a disability.

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

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.

The Governing Body 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 Chair of the Governing Body).

Students:

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

Teaching staff will be given, as relevant, advice from appropriate external agencies regarding learning needs of students with a disability (such as the Sensory Impairment Services).

Off-site Activities

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

Liaison with Parents

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 appropriate communication skills.

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

TRAINING

As far as is reasonable and practicable, appropriate training for staff and students will be included in an annual programme. In the case of students there will be units in appropriate areas of the national curriculum and in the PSHE programme.

Regular staff training will be undertaken regarding the needs for learning of particular students with a disability.

Support staff working with members of staff and/or students with a disability will be given relevant training.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- 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 Accessibility Plan; and
- review the Plan every 3 years.

Headteacher

- to oversee the implementation of the policy and Scheme;
- to report progress as required to the Governing Body;
 - o the Head will report to the Governing Body on members of staff who have a disability, and the steps taken to ensure that they are not treated less favourably;
 - o the Head will report on staff training issues relevant to the scheme as required;
 - o the Head will report to the Governing Body on relevant student activities and ensure that reasonable adjustments have been identified and implemented;
 - o the Head will ensure that the School's Accessibility Plan has been reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to the Governing Body;
 - o the Head will ensure that regular liaison with parents of students with a disability takes place.

All staff:

All staff have a duty to ensure, as far as is practicable, adherence to the intentions and purpose of this scheme, and to bring any potential shortcomings or difficulties to the attention of a member of the Senior Management Team.

Monitoring/Reviewing

The Governors will formally review the success of our Disability Scheme, every year and undertake a full revision every three years.

Reviewed by the Health & Safety Committee October 2011

Review: Every two years or earlier if required.

Next review due: Autumn 2013