

Oaks Park High School

Title of Policy: **Accessibility Plan**

Person responsible: **J Hamill**

Date for review: **2017**

This plan takes into account the Government's policy of improving access to education and educational achievement for disabled students. In accordance with the SEN Code of Practice 2014, Oaks Park High School will adhere to the following:

- Ensure that disabled and able students are treated equally.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled students are not disadvantaged.
- Prepare accessibility strategies (LEAs) and accessibility plans (schools) for increasing, over time, accessibility for disabled students (the 'planning duty').

We recognise that these duties are 'anticipatory' – ie. that schools need to consider the requirements of current and future disabled students. We will therefore make reasonable enquiries regarding disability for children currently on roll, as well as those seeking admission.

The school's duty to maintain equality covers all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities, educational visits and school trips. Its responsibility to make reasonable adjustments refers to the full range of policies, procedures and practices of the school.

Definition of Disability

Students falling within the definition of disability will have a range of needs, including mobility impairment, sensory impairment, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, epilepsy, AIDS, asthma and progressive/degenerative conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

The Disability Discriminatory Act (DDA) states 'a person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Education Act (1996) states 'children have a special education need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special education provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the LEA;
- are under compulsory school age and fall within the above definitions, or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them. Children with a disability must not automatically be considered to have a special educational need.'

We recognise the need for Oaks Park High School to consider Government policy; the LEA accessibility strategy and draw up a suitable Accessibility Plan. In drawing up this plan we have considered the present situation and future needs under the following headings:

- The physical environment of the school.
- The extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum.
- The delivery of information to students and parents/carers.

Disability Equality Scheme

Oaks Park High School will:

Promote equality of opportunity for disabled staff, students and parents/carers by:

- collecting and analysing data to help the school understand and address potential barriers;
- using this data to establish priorities within our Action Plan;
- working proactively to incorporate adjustments for disabled students, staff and parents/carers into policy and whole school practices;
- ensuring increasing access to the school's curriculum, the physical environment and to written information through the Accessibility Plan. The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed simultaneously with the Accessibility Plan to ensure the principles of disability equality are fulfilled.

Eliminate unlawful discrimination under the Disability Discrimination Act by:

- raising awareness of disability issues, providing training on relevant adjustments and encouraging sharing of good practice;
- reviewing and adjusting the school's policy and practice;
- raising expectations amongst all those working with disabled students, staff and parents/carers.

Eliminate harassment of disabled staff, students and parents/carers related to their disability by:

- raising awareness amongst staff and students of disability-related harassment;
- raising awareness of the importance of reporting possible bullying, however mild it may seem, to people without a disability;
- involving students themselves in combating bullying.

Promote positive attitudes towards disabled staff, students and parents/carers:

- through assemblies and the PSHE curriculum;
- through staff meetings;
- at parents' evenings;
- by displaying positive images of disabled people throughout the school.

Encourage participation by disabled staff, students and parents/carers in school life by:

- proactively seeking representation of disabled students, staff and parents/carers on the School Council and any of its committees;
- supporting disabled people who offer feedback to disabled students, staff and parents/carers to ensure that they feel confident in putting themselves forward for future participation;
- including information on the involvement of disabled people in the school's prospectus and newsletters;
- taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Implementation of the Disability Equality Scheme

Overall responsibility for the scheme will rest with the Governing Body. The Governor's Curriculum Committee will consider the progress of the scheme and report on an annual basis to the Governing Body (Autumn Term).

Governors will review current and future policies and plans to ensure that they fulfil the 6 principles of the Disability Equality Scheme as follows:

- Promote equality of opportunity for disabled staff, students and parents.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Eliminate harassment of disabled staff, students and parents/carers which is related to their disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled staff, students and parent/carers.
- Encourage participation by disabled staff, students and parents/carers in school life.

- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Disability Equality Scheme (cont.)

The Headteacher, together with senior members of staff, will take responsibility for ensuring that relevant aspects of the scheme are incorporated into and acted upon in the school's policies and development plans. Steps will be taken to meet the needs of disabled staff, students and parents/carers, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

In reviewing policies and development plans the school will consider whether:

- there is any evidence to show higher or lower take-up or participation by different groups;
- there is any evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy;
- there are opportunities to promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy.

The school will have consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals, when particular policies or functions create problems that are specific to them.

Publication and Review

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed alongside the school's Accessibility Plan, which sets out how the school intends to:

- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to disabled students of written information which is provided to students who are not disabled.

The Curriculum and Finance & Personnel Committees will be involved in the review of both documents and will advise on wider involvement in the Disabled Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan.

Accessibility Plan 2014-17

1. Physical Environment

Present situation:

- The school is fully accessible, with lifts in three buildings.
- There are three disabled car parking spaces.

2. School Décor

Present situation:

- The following help to make the school suitable for VI and HI students:
 - ❖ All classrooms have appropriate lighting.
 - ❖ The school interior is painted in contrasting colours in the majority of rooms.
 - ❖ Blinds are fitted in all rooms and each classroom has a carpeted area.
- A rolling programme is in place for redecoration of the school interior.
- A major expansion programme includes new facilities for students with disabilities.

3. Height of counters/layout of classrooms/appropriate furniture

Present situation:

- Height-adjustable chairs are available in computer rooms and school offices.
- Staff consider classroom layouts on an annual basis, taking into account the needs of the particular group of students. The layout will be reconsidered if a student joins the school after the start of the school year.
- The needs of disabled staff will be reviewed annually.

4. Toilet facilities

Present situation:

- Student and staff toilets are all accessible on the ground floor.
- Disabled toilet facilities are accessible in all buildings

5. Car parking for the disabled

Present situation:

- The school has three accessible car parking spaces.

6. Signs around school and school pathways

Present situation:

- Clear, accessible signs are situated around the school site.

7. School Curriculum

Present situation:

- Annual review of display/storage takes into account needs of each group of students.
- Audit of current equipment.
- Range of available equipment explored.
- New equipment considered in light of student and staff needs.
- Larger screens/accessories considered when replacing computers.
- Staff training on identifying barriers to access.
- Continued provision of resources for VI/HI students.

8. Delivery of Information

Present situation:

- Awareness of need to present information (e.g. prospectus/newsletters/contact form) in various formats.
- The school has facilities to produce documentation in Braille format.