

Disability Policy

St James Senior Boys' School

Aims of this policy

- to afford opportunity to employees and pupils who are disabled
- to ensure compliance with the Special Educational Needs Act 2011 and Disability and Equality Act 2010 as well as the Disability and Discrimination Act 2005
- to have regard to the guidance issued by the Disability Rights Commission "Code of Practice for Schools"
- To recognize our responsibilities to disabled parents and visitors to the school

Policy statement

At St James we strive to:

- maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the School
- train staff to understand the types of disabilities, physical and mental, and how to deal with employees and pupils who are disabled. Staff will not be expected, unless medically qualified, to administer medication
- adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of disabled children, being prepared to make reasonable adjustments in the admissions process where appropriate
- implement and review the Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the School's curriculum, improving the physical environment of the School and increasing access to information for our staff, and pupils. We will also take reasonable steps to improve access to school facilities for disabled parents and other visitors to the school.
- keep under review the School's Admission Policy, Equal Opportunity and Anti-Bullying policies in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Disability Act

The Disability Discrimination Act, passed in July 1995, was amended in September 2002 to incorporate schools.

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

“Impairment” has a long term effect if it has lasted or is expected to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person concerned.

“Substantial” is neither minor nor trivial.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against pupils with a disability. Discrimination can take place in two ways:

- Treating a pupil “less favorably” than others for a reason relating directly to their disability unless there are good reasons for that less favourable treatment.
- Failing to make a “reasonable adjustment” to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a “substantial disadvantage” for any reason relating to their disability.

By way of further explanation:

- an “adverse effect on day-to-day activity” means having a ‘significant and material’ effect on the following: Mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift carry or move every day objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; and perception of the risk of physical dangers. Case law indicates that “significant and material” means “more than minor or trivial”.

Other disabilities which may amount to disability include:

- Severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks (but not including tattoos or piercing)
- 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 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 such as paedophilia and/or abusive behaviour (unless the abusive behaviour stems from a disability e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD)
- A person diagnosed as HIV positive, until they exhibit physical symptoms or related conditions
- 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

Disability discrimination

We will not treat a pupil or member of Staff or a prospective pupil or employee less favourably on the grounds of disability unless there are good reasons for that less favourable treatment.

We will not knowingly discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability:

- 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
- by excluding a person on the grounds of their 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

Admission procedure for pupils

- The School will be open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment.
- The registration or admission form will enable the parents to give details of their child's disability.
- Every application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on grounds of the pupil's ability and aptitude.
- The School will treat every application from a disabled pupil in a fair, open-minded way.
- The School will, if appropriate, request from the parents or 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 School can make an assessment of the adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs.
- The applications will be considered on the basis that all 'reasonable adjustments' have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's disability.
- The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately for the pupil's physical and educational needs.
- The School shall inform the parents of their decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments they are going to make or give reasons why the offer of the place is declined.

Education and associated services

The School has an on-going duty to make reasonable adjustment in respect of the education and associated services provided. 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
- access to school facilities
- school sports
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes; the serving of school meals
- assessment, examinations and access arrangements (see Annexe A)
- school discipline and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, educational visits and other activities
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education

Staff will continue to be made aware of pupils with Disability or Special Educational Needs (by the Head of Learning Support, the Heads of Year and the Admissions Tutor).

Reasonable adjustments for pupils

The School is legally required to make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to cater for a child's disability. The School is not legally required to supply auxiliary aids or services or to make any alterations to the physical features of the School.

The School shall inform the Pupils and Parents of the reasonable adjustments that the School are legally required to make for that pupil, which may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam
- providing examination papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment

- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities

Staff will continue to be made aware of strategies to make “reasonable adjustments” within the classroom so as not to place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage in accessing the curriculum.

The implementation of reasonable adjustments to classroom management, teaching and expectations, should not prejudice the progress of other pupils, nor their Health and Safety (e.g. labs, workshops, sports equipment).

The School 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
- auxiliary aids and services such as a loop for children with hearing aids; large LCD screen computers and disability trained classroom assistants.

If parents are willing to pay for auxiliary aids and services, the School will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

Disclosure

Parents will be requested to provide the School with copies of the child’s latest medical report, educational psychologist’s report and any other information regarding the child’s disability.

If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the School has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child’s disability and the School is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those disabilities, then the School may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.

Review procedure

Parents may request a review if the School decides it is unable to offer their child a place on the grounds of disability. The request must be made as soon as possible and in any event within seven days of the decision being notified to the parents. The Head will advise as to the procedure under which such a review will be conducted.

Accessibility Plans

The School has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff (see Appendix 1).

The Accessibility Plan includes consideration of how the School proposes to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated service.
- improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is usually provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled

The plan will be reviewed every year, to ensure that the Plan is up-to-date and covers all aspects of School life.

Parents and visitors to the School

The School welcomes disabled parents and visitors to the school and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that they can access school facilities when those facilities are open to the public. This will include:

- Open Days
- Parents' Evenings
- Concerts and plays
- Exhibitions

- Conferences (including residential conferences during holiday periods)
- Use of sports facilities

Appendix 1: Accessibility Plan 2017/18/19

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
 - Head of PE write specific Risk Assessments for disabled pupils to participate in PE lessons; coordinate with learning support and matron (Sep); compatible with PEEPS (see Matron for more information)
 - Heads of Department ensure any fieldwork or trips can maximize accessibility for all pupils (Oct)
 - Trip coordinators (Activities Week) fully assess their trips to assess their compatibility with SEN pupils (Jan)
 - Heads of Department meet to discuss the accessibility of the curriculum for next academic year (May)
 - Time-tabler to assess rooming for next Academic year is compatible with disabled pupils (Jun)
 - SEND Department to liaise with all teachers/HODs to ensure SOW are accessible to all learners (throughout year)
 - Assess gravel area near DT lab: plan for paving (2019) to ensure access for disabled students
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated service
 - New driveway front of school (Sep)
 - New paving and pathways to outside play areas (Throughout year)
 - New paving at rear of refectory (with ramp) (Jan)
 - New Matron's office planned and costed situated on ground floor (Jun)
 - BK and CN to audit school for any necessary changes for next academic year (Jun)
 - Assess gravel area near DT lab: plan for paving (2019) to ensure access for disabled students
- improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils which is usually provided in writing to pupils who are not disabled

- Form Teachers concerned to write directly to parents (Sep), and respond to any concerns (Throughout year)
- SEND department to take lead on informing parents about rights and responsibilities, especially in relation to learning disabilities
- SENDCO to assess using Firefly for specific communication (2019)

ANNEXE A: Public Examination Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities

Invigilation:

All staff and invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues.

All Examination Staff/Invigilators are aware of policies, emergency evacuation procedure and medication, especially when they relate to candidates with a disability. An up-to-date list of students with medical need and medication will be displayed in the examination rooms.

Invigilators are trained, as required, by the Learning Support Team on alternative means of communications, especially in the examination room when conveying information to disabled candidates.

Seating Arrangements:

Chairs will be placed outside the examination room to enable candidates with a disability or those experiencing extreme stress or anxiety, to sit and rest before they enter the examination.

Sufficient space will be made between desks and chairs to enable candidates with wheelchairs easy access.

We will ensure that the seating is both appropriate and comfortable for those who have a disability which affects sitting and posture.

Candidates who are likely to become unwell during the examination due to the nature of their disability, will be placed close to the exit to make them feel more comfortable and to limit disruption to other candidates.

Some candidates may sit their examination in a separate room but only if they have an established difficulty (see section 5.16 of the JCQ access arrangement booklet) . Invigilators will be given specific instructions on how to conduct the examination. This will have been agreed with the Exams Officer and the SENCO prior to seating the examination.

Candidates requiring access arrangements:

We will ensure that for candidates who have been granted the use of an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe, that those individuals who will be acting as an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe, are introduced to the candidates prior to the examinations taking place. Those individuals will normally be part of the Learning Support Team and will already be known to the candidates.

Candidates who have been granted supervised rest breaks will be able to rest in suitable areas without jeopardizing the security of the examination. Supervised rest breaks will apply to candidates who suffer from fatigue, hyperactivity, obsessive compulsive disorders or long term health conditions.

For candidates who have been granted a prompter, the person appointed to act as a prompter will be made aware of disability etiquette, particularly when touching the candidate's desk as a mean of a prompt, or tapping the candidate's arm or shoulder.

For on-screen tests, the hardware and software will be adapted to the candidates' needs for those with a sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure:

Invigilators and staff involved in conducting examinations will be made aware of the emergency evacuation procedures in place for those candidates with a disability who may need assistance in leaving the building. Specific staff will be allocated to look after those with disabilities.

When evacuation and emergency procedures are explained to the candidates, special attention will be given to those candidates with a disability, for whom such procedures may be different.

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