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# HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY / DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Person Responsible	Head Teacher
Date Adopted	July 2015
Date of last review	Summer 2021
Date of next review	Summer 2023

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**The SEN and Disability Act 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to cover education. The Board of Governors has three key duties towards disabled students, under Part 4 of the DDA:**

- not to treat disabled students less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled students.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Board of Governors of the school to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by the planning duties in the DDA:

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

**It is a requirement that the school's accessibility plan is resourced, implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary (see appendix 3)**

#### 1.1 Definition of Disability:

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA):

'A person has 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.'

#### Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The duty to promote disability equality requires all schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others
- 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.

Our Disability Equality Scheme will outline how we will fulfil this duty and include a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bonded targets in the form of an action plan.

### School's Duty

The Board of Governors has a duty to:

- promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: students, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to
- produce and publish a **Disability Equality Scheme** to show how they will meet these duties.

## **1.2 The Disability Equality Scheme**

The Board of Governors is required to plan to increase access to education for disabled students in three ways, by:

- increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the school curriculum
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled students can take advantage of education and associated services
- improving the delivery to disabled students of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

## **2. THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME**

Name of School: Hoe Valley School

Two Year Period Covered by Plan: July 2021--July 2023

### **2.1 School's Aims and Values in relation to equality of provision**

At Hoe Valley School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, students and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability. The achievement of all students will be monitored on the basis of disability and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will aim to provide our students with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of

disability. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against students and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation.

At HVS we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

HVS aims to identify and remove barriers to disabled students in every area of school life.

HVS has high ambitions for its disabled students and expects them to participate in all aspects of school life.

At HVS our commitment to equal opportunities is driven by the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement. The school:

- sets suitable learning challenges
- responds to students' diverse needs
- overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students.

At HVS we will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

## **2.2 Roles and Responsibilities**

This Disability and Equality Scheme links to other specific policies and action plans that the school produces including the School Development Plan and Accessibility Plan.

This Disability and Equality Scheme outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school so that each person knows what is expected of them. **Promoting disability and equality and raising the achievement of disabled students is the responsibility of the whole school staff.**

Introduction to this Disability and Equality Scheme will be included in our induction arrangements for all staff new to the school. School induction procedures will highlight duties implied by this policy in the same way as child protection, health and safety and behaviour policies form part of the induction process.

The Head Teacher and Leadership Team will monitor, through SLT meetings, the progress of students with disabilities. They will also consider the impact of policies and procedures on these students and their social interaction with other students. They will lead progress on actions in the action plan.

The Board of Governors will ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and students in school. This will include monitoring recruitment, retention and continuing professional development for disabled and non-disabled staff; monitoring academic and social standards for all students. The Board of Governors will ensure that the Action Plan is reviewed and updated as required.

All staff will be familiar with this scheme and ensure that they provide equal access and opportunity for students they teach or support.

Students will treat all people with respect and fairness, without discriminating against them or harassing them.

Parents and carers will support the school in identifying the needs of disabled students or their own needs in relation to this scheme.

### **2.3 Training**

All staff and governors will receive training on the Disability and Equality Scheme and their responsibilities under it. For existing staff this will be through a staff meeting briefing. For new staff, it will form part of their induction.

All students will be given an overview of the scheme following its formal adoption and will be given instruction around their responsibilities. This will take place during an assembly.

### **2.4 Breach of the Policy**

If staff breach the policy, action will be taken in line with the Discipline and Capability policy.

If students breach the policy, action will be taken through the Behaviour for Learning policy.

### **2.5 Involvement of disabled students, staff and parents**

Disabled students, staff, parents and disabled members of the community who may use school facilities will be invited, to comment on this scheme and the action plan. Should comments made by them require this scheme to be modified or adjusted, amendments will be made and the policy reviewed.

### **2.6 Information Gathering**

The Admin Officer of the school will continue to gather information on candidates' declaration of disabled status. This will be monitored annually by the relevant Governing Committee. Staff leaving school will cover their reasons for leaving at an exit interview which will be shared, where relevant to this scheme, with the relevant Governing Committee.

The Committee will monitor annually the training provision for disabled staff in comparison to non-disabled staff and action taken to amend access to continuing professional development accordingly.

Disabled students are identified in the school's tracking system and their progress is monitored in comparison with their non-disabled peers. The social interaction of all students in school is monitored by class teachers, this is monitored as a regular agenda item for the SLT and at staff meetings as required.

Should the monitoring described above indicate that action needs to be taken to address any imbalances, the Action Plan will be updated accordingly and changes shared with stakeholders throughout the School.

## **2.7 Assessing the impact of policies**

The impact of the school's policies and practices on students with disabilities will be monitored by their class teachers and the Head of Personalisation.

Disabled students and their parents will be asked for feedback on an informal basis at any time and more formally when student and parent questionnaires are issued.

## **2.8 Identifying the main priorities for the school's scheme and deciding on actions**

HVS's aims and vision is positive and inclusive concerning any person with disability or special educational need. All lessons are personalised to support the needs of all learners and progress of students is reviewed termly with subsequent interventions put in place for learners who are underachieving.

Everyone is encouraged to look for the positive in everyone they meet and work with. This is taught in PSHE and SRE lessons and reinforced through assemblies. Discrimination and harassment is not accepted in school.

As school policies are reviewed under the regular cycle, their impact on this scheme will be included in the review.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS AND GOVERNORS**

**Information Gathering**

- Is information collected on disability with regards to both students and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision?
- Is student achievement monitored by disability? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- Are disabled students encouraged to participate in school life? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- Are disabled students given access to opportunities to participate in a range of activities, both in and outside of school hours?
- Is bullying and harassment of disabled students monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Are stereotypes in terms of disability actively challenged in both the classroom environment and in the playground?
- Is the school environment as accessible and welcoming as possible to disabled people? Are open evenings and other events which parents/carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Are disabled parents/carers encouraged to participate in their child's education e.g. attending parents' evening, taking up parent/family learning courses, and assemblies?
- Does the school take appropriate steps to meet disabled people's needs even if this requires more favourable treatment?

## APPENDIX 2 DEFINING DISABILITY

The disability discrimination duties and the planning duties are owed to all students who are defined by the DDA as being disabled. The DDA 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.'*

The definition covers a much larger group of children than most people think. A report from the Cabinet Office (2005) *Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People*, draws on estimates that suggest that about 772,000 children in the UK are disabled, equivalent to 7% of all children.

### **Definition of the terms:**

- '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'; and
- 'long-term' is defined as 12 months or more.

### **Mental and physical impairments**

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the student's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above. Some progressive conditions, such as cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS are included before they have an effect on the pupil's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Normal day-to-day activities**

The test of whether an impairment affects normal day-to-day activity is whether it affects one of the following:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

### **Special educational needs and disability**

Though the definition of disability comes from the DDA and the definition of special educational needs comes from the Education Act 1996, there is a significant overlap between the two groups of children. The definition of SEN includes many, but not necessarily all, disabled children: a disabled child has special educational needs if they have a disability and need special educational provision to be made for them in order to be able to access the education which is available locally.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **THE SCHOOL'S ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

#### **The purpose and direction of the School's plan: vision and values**

At HVS we are committed to giving all of our students every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of students' varied life experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum and have high expectations for all students. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our students matter. HVS promotes the individuality of all its students, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

HVS aims to be an inclusive school. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual students, or groups of students. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our students:

- girls and boys;
- minority ethnic and faith groups;
- students who need support to learn English as an additional language;
- students with special educational needs;
- gifted and talented students;
- students who are vulnerable.

We acknowledge that there may be times when this is impossible or inappropriate, despite our wishes or best efforts.

#### **Information from student data and school audit**

We currently have a whole range of students of all backgrounds, needs and abilities. At the end of June 2021 we have 22% of the cohort with a Special Educational Need and / or Disability. Within this we have two student with a Hearing Impairment, three with mild cerebral palsy and one student with a severe visual impairment. We have one member of staff who has a hearing impairment.

Prior to joining HVS, we collect information from the primary schools, so that we are prepared for students when they arrive in school. We liaise with parents and professionals involved with the students to ensure we provide the right care for their needs. We then ensure the right provision is in place for each student via the IEP process which is led by the personalisation faculty. This provision is reviewed twice a year by the SENCO in a meeting with parents and the student (see SEND policy)

#### **Views of those consulted during the development of the plan**

During the recent SEN review meetings with parents (held June and July 2021) there were no adaptations required to ensure students can access their education. Parents were confident in the School's ability to meet their child's needs.

### **The main priorities in the school's plan**

We take advice on support needed for students with disabilities and work with experts to ensure they have the support necessary to fully include them in the life of the school.

Our priorities are to ensure that:

- The extension of the temporary site meets the needs of our disabled learners
- The recruitment process is fully inclusive
- The school draws on the expertise of external agencies to provide specialist advice and support particularly with the HI support services as this is our primary group
- The SENCO has an overview of the needs of disabled students
- There are high expectations of all staff and students
- There is appropriate deployment and training of learning support staff
- Successful practice is shared within the school
- Disabled students have access to extra-curricular activities and a range of trips and visits