

## **DISABILITY INCLUSION POLICY**

### **1. Principles**

The Governing Board, senior management and staff of d'Overbroeck's are wholly committed to the principles and aims of the Equality Act 2010 and to its implications for schools. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities for Pupils policy, the Exams Accessibility policy and the school's current Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility plan is appended to this policy.

We fully take on board our responsibility, in accordance with our equality obligations, not to treat disabled students or prospective students less favourably than their non-disabled peers, and to comply with our duty to provide reasonable adjustments for those students with a disability who are at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

We aim to make sure that this principle applies in all aspects of our school life including admissions and exclusions, examinations, and the provision of education and all other related services including sport and other activities. And we seek to ensure that this principle is applied whenever relevant individual decisions have to be made or whole-school policies reviewed.

### **2. Definitions**

#### **2.1 Disability**

Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 defines disability as any 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

In the definition of disability given above:

- 'Impairment' can be a physical or mental condition.
- 'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.
- 'Long term' means that the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so, or that it is likely to last for the rest of the affected person's life.
- 'Normal day to day activities' could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of examples given on page 34 of the government's guidance ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/85010/disability-definition.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85010/disability-definition.pdf)). Study and education-related activities are included in the meaning of 'day to day activities'.

**Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:**

- Persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- Persistent distractibility or difficulty in concentrating;
- Difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions.

**Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:**

- Minor problems with writing or spelling;
- Inability to fill in a long, detailed, technical document, which is in the person's native language, without assistance;
- Inability to concentrate on a task requiring application over several hours.

## **2.2 Special educational needs**

A person has 'special educational needs' as defined in the SEND code of practice if s/he has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for her/him.

A person has a learning difficulty or disability if s/he:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Those disabled students with substantial and long-term impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, mental health difficulties and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, do not necessarily have SEN; but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

## **2.3 Disability discrimination**

Within the Equality Act 2010 unlawful disability discrimination can be:

- Direct discrimination (which can be discrimination based on perception or association), which is discrimination which occurs because of the 'protected characteristic' of disability;
- Discrimination arising from disability, which will occur where a disabled pupil or member of staff has been treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability;
- Indirect discrimination, which will occur where the school applies a 'provision criterion or practice' in the same way for all pupils/staff but which has the effect of putting disabled pupils/staff at a particular disadvantage; and
- Discrimination arising from a failure to make reasonable adjustments.

Indirect discrimination and discrimination arising from disability can be justified if it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

## **2.4 Less favourable treatment**

For 'less favourable treatment' to lead to unlawful disability discrimination it must be shown to be:

- for a reason related to the person's disability; and
- less favourable treatment than the treatment given to a person without disability; and not justified.

## **2.5 Justification:**

Less favourable treatment can be justified if the reasons are material to the circumstances and substantial. In addition, in the case of a student, non-admission to a school can be justified if it is the result of a 'permitted form of selection'. Selective schools can continue to select so long as the criteria are not such as to exclude only students with disabilities.

## **3. Accessibility planning**

### **3.1 Aims**

We are committed to ensuring that as far as reasonably practicable our school environment and our educational provision in its widest sense are accessible to students and prospective students with disabilities. We are ready to consider all reasonable adjustments that would, over time, help us to achieve this aim more fully and more effectively.

This commitment is made within the limits imposed on us by such constraints as:

- health and safety;
- the physical layout of our teaching and residential buildings;
- the practicalities and cost implications of certain changes;
- the need to maintain academic and other standards;
- the interests of other pupils and the school community as a whole.

The school's current Accessibility Plan covering the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2018 (was previously 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2009 and April 2009 to March 2012 and 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2015). It is appended to, and forms a part of, this policy.

### **3.2 Approach and structure**

The school's Accessibility Plan contains relevant actions to:

- a. Enhance the extent to which disabled students are able to participate and take full advantage of the curriculum;
- b. Improve the physical environment for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school; and
- c. Improve the delivery of information to disabled students.

The school proprietor is responsible for ensuring the implementation and review of the Accessibility Plan during the period to which it relates.

**ACCESSIBILITY PLAN: 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2018**

This Accessibility Plan supports, and should be read alongside, the school's Disability Inclusion Policy. It identifies the physical evidence of the commitment of the Governing Board, senior management and staff of d'Overbroeck's to the principles and aims of the Equality Act 2010.

**Context**

As at 5 September 2016, the school does not have any students with EHCs or statements of special educational needs. Around 90 students (out of our total student population of around 480) study English as an additional language (EAP). Students with individual education plans are regularly monitored to assess progress relating to their Individual targets.

We aim to ensure that any disabled students at the school are fully integrated into school life and that, as far as practically possible, they participate in the whole curriculum including extra-curricular activities (such, for example, as school trips).

We take a fully inclusive approach to our staff recruitment and aim to appoint the best person based on their skills and qualifications and regardless of any disability s/he might have. We actively implement an equal opportunities approach in the day-to-day management of the school.

**Principles and practice**

d'Overbroeck's aims to offer the highest quality of teaching and learning and pastoral care, and to support all students in the pursuit of academic and personal excellence. We have (appropriately) high expectations of all of our students and we strive to ensure that each and every student can take part in the whole school curriculum. We value the diversity of our school community and appreciate the contribution that students with special educational needs and/or disabilities can bring to the life of the school.

The school's admissions policy (which is available on our website) seeks to remove barriers to entry for students with special needs and/or disabilities. At all times and in all ways, we strive to be an inclusive and welcoming school.

We regularly review and take steps to improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled students are able to take advantage of education and associated services offered by the school. Examples of recent improvements can be seen in the table below.

Our new Sixth Form teaching site at 333 Banbury Road and the new Boarding House at 376 Banbury Road, both of which are due to open in September 2017, have been designed to be fully compliant with the all current buildings regulations in every respect including disabled access throughout. Once the new site at 333 is in use, we intend to cease using two of our current teaching buildings: Ewert Place and St Giles. Both of these buildings offer severely restricted access for a wheelchair user, which it has not been possible to address in any substantial way given the constraints of space and the layout of the buildings. Physical access will, therefore, be greatly improved from September 2017 when the new buildings are in commission.

Of our remaining school buildings, the main school building at our Years 7-11 site on Leckford Road is fully accessible. We have in the last couple of years accommodated a disabled student who is permanently in a wheelchair. However, the school Hall, which was not included in the original refurbishment work carried out in 2005, does not currently allow easy access for a wheelchair user. The Hall is on two floors, with three access points to the main space and two separate access points to the lower hall. All require users to go up or down several steps. Ramps were purchased in April 2015, shortly followed by a Stair Walker for which the training is still to be completed. (See table below.)

As and when appropriate, we provide written information to students with disabilities in ways that are user-friendly and fully support the students in their learning experience. We also make extensive use of digital technology to disseminate information to students and to parents, and wireless internet access is available in all the school's teaching and residential buildings. Administrative staff and Boarding Houseparents will often relay information / reminders verbally to students; activities staff may use mobile phones and text messaging to convey messages / reminders to students; and information can be provided in large print, audio form or more accessible format for those students who require it.

Staff are encouraged to review their teaching strategies to ensure that any potential barriers to learning and participation by disabled students are removed. We support our teaching and non-teaching staff with information and training designed to raise their awareness of disabilities and to enable them to minimise any potential difficulties for students. For example, we ensure that the pace and content of lessons and the nature of classroom texts and hand-outs are suitable for students with disabilities. We promote the importance of using language that does not offend amongst both our staff and our students and ensure that, wherever possible, positive examples of disability are portrayed in teaching materials.

The use of ICT in the classroom is a recognised way of increasing access to the curriculum and the school has pursued an incremental policy of equipping classrooms with electronic whiteboards and digital projectors and providing laptops and tablets/notebooks for classroom use. The great majority of classrooms now have EWBs and projectors, and the intention is that all will have them by September 2017.

## **Review**

The school's policies (including the Accessibility Plan), procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect students and prospective students who are disabled are reviewed as often as is necessary but at least annually by the Principal and the Bursar, with input from other colleagues as appropriate.

The review process is conducted with a view to improving the accessibility of education to students or prospective students with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future.

With the advent of the new buildings at 333 and 376 and the re-design of the Swan Building due to be completed in the summer of 2017, it has been agreed that a fresh audit will be conducted in the autumn term of 2017. This will help inform the existing three-year plan and form the basis of its next edition.

## **Action plan**

Our ongoing internal audit and review process has informed the action plan below which relates to the Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

<b>Equality Act 2010</b>	<b>Description</b>
Schedule 10	
3. (2)(a)	Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum;
3. 2(b)	Improving the physical environment of the school for the purposes of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
3. 2(c)	Improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Standard To Be Met</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Resources Required</b>	<b>Evidence of Impact on Stakeholder</b>	<b>Target Completion Date (short/medium or long-term)</b>
1. Assess current provision	Schedule 10 3. 2	Conduct accessibility questionnaire across students, staff and parents	Bursar	H & S Consultant (Being appointed Summer 2016)		October 2016
2. Radically improve physical accessibility	Schedule 10 3. 2(b)	New build programme – 333, 376 and redevelopment of the Swan Building	Bursar	Architect (TSH) builders – Kingerlee/ Benfield & Loxley		September 2017
3. Improve physical access to adjustable table in Years 7-11 science lab	Schedule 10 3. 2(b)	Refurbish adjustable table in Years 7-11 science lab	Facilities & Compliance Manager	£120	Check with wheelchair student that restored facility is adequate	1 September 2015

<b>Target</b>	<b>Standard To Be Met</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Resources Required</b>	<b>Evidence of Impact on Stakeholder</b>	<b>Target Completion Date (short/medium or long-term)</b>
4. Improve physical access to the Hall at the Leckford Road site	Schedule 10 3.2(b)	Install ramps to provide wheelchair access to hall	Facilities & Compliance Manager	Portable ramps purchased in April 2015	Wheelchair student able to access Hall for assemblies and other events.	April 2015
5. Improve physical access to Hall at the Leckford Road site	Schedule 10 3. 2(b)	Complete training of key staff on us rog stair-walker	Facilities & Compliance Manager	To be identified	Ensure key staff feel sufficiently competent to train other staff	31 December 2016
6. Increase student access to mobile technology at Years 7-11 site	Schedule 10 3. 2(c)	Install additional class set of laptops at Years 7-11 site	IT Manager	£6k	Ascertain from stakeholders that access has improved	1 September 2016
7. Arrange new Accessibility audit for September 2017	Schedule 10 3. 2	Book company to conduct Accessibility audit	Facilities & Compliance Manager	To be confirmed	Compare pre-and post-audit questionnaires	31 December 2017
8. Install EWB (or similar) in all classrooms across the school.	Schedule 10 3. 2(b) and (c)	Continued programme of installation.	Bursar	EWBs		Summer 2017
9. Continue to improve Fire Safety for disabled students	Schedule 10 3. 2(b)	Install Evacuation Chairs at The Swan Building	Facilities & Compliance Manager	2 x new evacuation chairs		Summer 2017

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