

Disability Policy

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1. The Policy

This policy applies to the schools of the Stephen Perse Foundation (the **Foundation**). It is applicable to students across the whole school community including the Early Years Foundation Stage (**EYFS**) and the Foundation boarding community.

2. Guiding Principles

At the Foundation, all students are valued and we are committed to providing both equal access for all to the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled, and high standards of teaching and learning, and care in boarding, which is responsive to individual needs. The aim of this policy is to outline the opportunities which may be afforded to all pupils who are disabled and to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) whilst paying regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission "What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools". The Foundation recognises that the definition of 'disability' has some overlap with the definition of 'special educational needs' (Children and Families Act 2014) and further information relating to our provision for students with special educational needs and learning difficulties can be found in the separate Foundation Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

3. Policy Statement

The Foundation is committed to maintaining and driving a positive culture towards the inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the Schools and the Foundation's boarding accommodation and a culture which rejects discrimination. Where necessary, staff are trained to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with students who are disabled, though they are not expected - unless medically qualified or trained - to administer medication. The Foundation regularly reviews its Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of each School's curriculum, improving the physical environment of the Schools and boarding accommodation and improving access to information for students and applicants. We regularly review our Admissions Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of disabled children, consulting with them about the reasonable adjustments which can be made to ensure that the admissions process is accessible for their children.

4. Definition of Disability

- 4.1. A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a "substantial and long-term adverse effect" on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act 2010); an adverse effect is considered 'long term' if it lasts, or is likely to last, 12 months or longer.

4.2. As stated in 'Disability: Equality Act 2010 - Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability' (March 2013), disability can arise from a wide range of impairments, which can include:

- physical impairments, such as mobility difficulties;
- sensory impairments, such as those affecting hearing or sight;
- impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects such as rheumatoid arthritis, myalgic encephalitis (ME), chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), fibromyalgia, depression and epilepsy;
- progressive, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, and forms of dementia;
- auto-immune conditions such as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE);
- organ specific, including respiratory conditions, such as asthma, and cardiovascular diseases, including thrombosis, stroke and heart disease;
- developmental, such as autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), dyslexia and dyspraxia;
- learning disabilities;
- mental health conditions with symptoms such as anxiety, low mood, panic attacks, phobias, or unshared perceptions; eating disorders; bipolar affective disorders; obsessive compulsive disorders; personality disorders; post traumatic stress disorder, and some self-harming behaviour;
- mental illnesses, such as depression and schizophrenia;
- produced by injury to the body, including to the brain.

4.3. Other disabilities which may amount to disability under the Equality Act 2010 include:

- severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks (but not including tattoos or piercings);
- progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activities;
- a controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a 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.

4.4. The following people are deemed to meet the definition of a disability without having to show that they have an impairment that has (or is likely to have) a substantial, adverse, long-term effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities:

- A person who has cancer, HIV infection or multiple sclerosis;
- A person who is certified as blind or partially sighted by a consultant ophthalmologist, or is registered as such with a local authority.

4.5. Certain conditions are not to be regarded as a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. These include:

- hay fever sufferers;
- the manifestation of anti-social tendencies or demonstration of abusive behaviour;
- 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 unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment.

4.6. A person with an excluded condition may nevertheless be protected under the Equality Act 2010 if they have an accompanying impairment which meets the requirements of the definition of a disability. For example, a person who is addicted to a substance such as alcohol may also have depression or a physical impairment arising from the addiction to alcohol.

5. Discrimination

The Foundation will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining admission procedures;
- in the terms on which a place, including a boarding place, at any School is offered;
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission;
- in the provision of education and associated services;
- in the way the Schools afford access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the Foundation;
- by excluding a person on the grounds of their disability;
- by harassing a person with a 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.

5.1. Admission procedure for pupils

5.2. Each School is open to applications from any prospective pupil with disabilities and each application will be considered on its merits within the Foundation's criteria for selection on the grounds of the child's ability and aptitude. The Registration Form will require the parents to give details of their child's disability and on completion of this form the Foundation will, if appropriate, request from the parents or the previous school full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the child's disability. The Foundation needs this information so that staff can assess the child's needs and consult with parents about the reasonable adjustments that can be made to ensure that the application process is accessible for the child and that the Foundation can provide adequately for the child should an offer of a place be made.

- 5.3. Applications will be considered on the basis that all reasonable adjustments have been, or will be, made by the Foundation in order to cater for the child's disability (see definition below). The Foundation will not offer a place, or a boarding place, if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the Foundation will not be able to provide adequately or appropriately for the child's disability. The Foundation will inform the parents of its decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments it is prepared to make or give reasons why the offer of a place or the offer of a boarding place will not be made. Each application from a disabled child will be treated in a fair, open-minded way.
- 5.4. The Foundation's Admissions Policy is available on the Foundation's website. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and includes information about how the Foundation supports those applicants with a disability.

6. Education and associated services

The Foundation has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided by each of its Schools. 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 and examination arrangements
- school discipline and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, educational visits including residentials and other activities; and
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

7. Reasonable adjustments for pupils

- 7.1. When providing educational services to a pupil, the Foundation is legally required to make "reasonable adjustments" in order to cater for a pupil's disability and these adjustments may include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair or with other mobility issues to attend an

interview in an accessible room;

- allowing access arrangements in internal and public exams, such as extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
- providing modified question papers, such as a larger print for a pupil 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;
- making use of technological tools such as iPad speech functions, and keyboards where needed;
- providing quiet, fall back spaces, where possible, for pupils experiencing sensory challenges.

7.2. The Foundation 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.

7.3. The Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". The Foundation will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

8. Disclosure

8.1. Parents are requested to provide the Foundation with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding their child's disability. If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the Foundation has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's disability and the Foundation is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those disabilities, then the Foundation may withdraw the offer of a place, the offer of a boarding place or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.

8.2. The Foundation will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of a person's disability as confidential.

9. Additional welfare needs

9.1. The Foundation recognises that pupils with a disability may be at risk of being bullied. The Foundation's anti-bullying policy makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken seriously.

9.2. There may be additional barriers when detecting the abuse or neglect of pupils with a disability. The Foundation is mindful in particular that:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse relate to the pupil's disability without further exploration;
- Pupils with a disability can be disproportionately impacted by bullying without showing any signs; and
- There may be communication barriers which may also be difficult to overcome to identify whether actions under this policy are required.

9.3. Safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Foundation's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. Accessibility plans

10.1. The Foundation has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff. The Accessibility Plan includes consideration of how the Foundation proposes to:

- increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the Foundation's curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the Foundation;
- improve the delivery to pupils with a disability of information which is readily accessible to pupils who do not have a disability.

10.2. The Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that it is up-to-date and covers all aspects of each School's life.

11. Related policies and documents

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Fire Safety and Prevention Policy
- Pastoral Policy
- Risk assessment Policy for Student Welfare
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

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