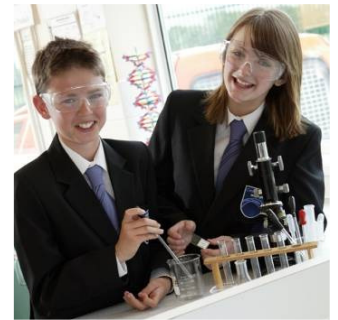


Ratified by Oasis Community
Learning Executive:
8th May 2009

Disability Equality Policy (Students)

Implementation: May 2009
Review: May 2011



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement. The Academy will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join the Academy community as students, staff and Academy Council members.
- 1.2 The Academy has been designed and built to have provision and accessibility for students with disabilities so that they may be integrated fully into Academy life. The curriculum has been designed so that it may be delivered to provide flexible and equal access to all students whether able or disabled as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment.
- 1.3 This policy is guided by Oasis Community Learning's ethos, which states our commitment to model inclusion and compassion throughout all aspects of the life and culture of each Oasis Academy community. To view the full ethos statement see appendix 1.

2 Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are to ensure that:
- Applications for admission from all potential students are considered in line with the published admission arrangements.
 - Disabled students have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Academy.
 - The views of individual students are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
 - All students are fully integrated into the Academy and individual needs are assessed and supported as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment.
 - Staff working with disabled people, either as colleagues or as students, have appropriate information, support and training.
 - The Academy takes steps to enable students who become disabled during their time at the Academy to continue in their chosen career or course of study as far as is practicable.
 - Disabled members of the public can participate in public events held within the Academy.
 - So far as is reasonably practicable, the Academy premises are accessible and safe for disabled students; and
 - No disabled student is treated less favourably as a result of their disability.

3 Implementation

- 3.1 The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are made aware of this policy and that the Disability Code of Practice set out below is followed. (Throughout this policy the term 'parents' means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)
- 3.2 The Principal and the Oasis Community Learning Board will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy statement is implemented.

4 Disability Code of Practice

Environment

- 4.1 Any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities.
- 4.2 Evacuation procedures and escape routes for people with disabilities will be carefully planned and published.

Students

- 4.3 Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all students. An applicant's disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into the Academy unless:
 - The content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the student would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
 - The Academy would be unable to provide suitably trained staff or facilities to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met.
- 4.4 The Academy will aim to provide disabled students with the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated. The Academy will not treat a student with a disability less favourably than any other student and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration of disabled students.
- 4.5 As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled students will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a disabled student cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.
- 4.6 Students with a disability or who become disabled whilst studying at the Academy will be given appropriate support from staff to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the Inclusion Co-ordinator – Learning Support and a Personalised Learning Plan drawn up on an annual basis.
- 4.7 The Academy recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable students with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such students to perform to the best of their ability by meeting their individual needs. The Academy will liaise with the relevant Examination Boards in such instances. Students and parents will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the Inclusion Co-ordinator – Learning Support in liaison with specific curriculum area managers and the Academy's Examinations Manager.

5 Liaison with Parents

- 5.1 The Academy will report to parents annually on:
 - the Accessibility Plan;
 - how the Academy helps disabled students gain access to the curriculum; and
 - what the Academy does to ensure fair treatment for disabled students.
- 5.2 The Academy will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all students with disability through the provision of designated staff members with allocated time and effective communication skills.

- 5.3 Whenever appropriate, information to home will be provided in different formats to take account of disability.
- 5.4 Under the supervision of a senior member of staff with delegated responsibility, staff with pastoral responsibility will liaise closely with the homes of students who exhibit behavioural difficulties to determine whether they arise from disability or from domestic or social circumstances. They will report to the senior member of staff who will determine, after consultation, appropriate action.
- 5.5 The Academy, at least annually, will remind parents of the Academy's Complaints Procedure.

6 Staff Training and Awareness

The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and plan, and its implications for their work in the Academy. They will also ensure appropriate training for staff who have relevant responsibilities towards disabled staff, students and visitors.

7 The Disability Accessibility Scheme

- 7.1 The Scheme (set out in Appendix 2) aims to improve access to all aspects of education within the Academy. The Academy is organised in a way that:
- helps to remove any existing barriers to students;
 - aims to widen the opportunities for including more students within the academy;
 - enables any difficulties to be overcome.
- 7.2 In this way the Academy is showing its commitment both to the members of staff and students and its community, based on the promotion of self-respect and respect for others.
- 7.3 The plan (set out in Appendix 3) has three inter-linked elements:
- a) Improvements in access to the curriculum by:
 - Providing for all students a curriculum which is appropriate to them.
 - Ensuring that the curriculum is delivered in such a way that all students regardless of any impairment, may benefit fully from it.
 - b) Improvements to facilities by:
 - Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated facilities.
 - Providing appropriate educational equipment and physical aids so that educational programmes in the Academy can be fully accessed by all students.
 - c) Improvements to the premises by:
 - Ensuring that all the Academy buildings and grounds facilities are accessible to students with mobility, sensory and other impairments.
 - d) Improvements to Information by:
 - Providing for students and their parents, information about the Academy that takes account of disability and its curriculum in a format that takes account of any disability.
 - Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for students.

8 References

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) states that an employer must make “reasonable adjustments” to allow an individual to be employed. These adjustments may include:

- Adaptations to premises
- Re-allocating some duties
- Altering hours
- Finding alternative accommodation
- Rehabilitation leave
- Training
- Modifying equipment
- Modifying instructions or manuals
- Modifying assessment or testing procedures
- Providing a reader or interpreter
- Providing supervision

Further information can be obtained from:

- i the ‘Code of Practice for Schools’ (Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Part 4)
- ii Jobcentre Plus
- iii the Equality and Human Rights Commission (www.equalityhumanrights.com)

9 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 9.1 The Oasis Community Learning Board will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

10 Date of next Review: May 2011

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chair of Academy Council

Appendix 1

Oasis Community Learning Ethos

Our ethos is an expression of our character - it is a statement of who we are and therefore the lens through which we assess all we do. Our work is motivated and inspired by the life, message and example of Christ, which shapes and guides every aspect of each of our schools. This is foundational to our belief that all people are created and loved by God as equal and unique beings, and to our commitment to model inclusion and compassion throughout all the aspects of the life and culture of each Academy community.

Appendix 2

Some sections of The Scheme below require each Academy to insert its actual practice. This is an example.

The Disability Accessibility Scheme

1 Consultation

In developing this Scheme the Academy will consult staff, parents and students, and any appropriate agencies.

1.1 Staff

The Academy aims, within the constraints of resources available, to ensure that no member of staff with disabilities is less favourably treated in the procedures and practices in respect of:

- recruitment, performance management, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the premises.

1.2 Students

The Academy aims, within the constraints of resources available, to enable each student to fulfil his/her potential, within an educational programme that has development of the whole person at its core.

The Academy aims to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the Academy premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

The Academy will examine each disability case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate a disabled student's needs.

1.3 Identifying Disabilities

Set out how the Academy identifies staff and students with disabilities, records and reviews them. It will include a note on the risk assessments that should be carried out on behalf of disabled staff, students and visitors, and who is responsible for them.

1.4 Meeting Needs

Set out how disabled students' needs in each of the identified areas are actually provided for by the Academy. There will be a need for a similar list for staff and 'visitors', setting out what steps the Academy actually takes.

1.5 Managing the Scheme

Include also how it is proposed to manage the Scheme - what needs to be recorded; what reported and to whom.

It might be helpful to take each of the following legal responsibilities as section headings, and to explain what steps the Academy has taken, or proposes to take, to fulfil the duty:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- 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.

2 Premises

- 2.1 The Academy recognises that through the provisions of SENDDA (Special Educational Needs/ Disability Discrimination Act) it is not required to provide 'auxiliary aids' (i.e. special equipment or additional personal support), nor make 'physical alterations to the buildings', (such as provide lifts).
- 2.2 However, to meet its obligations, the Academy will ensure that the needs of disabled staff and students (and any adult students) are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the campus.
- 2.3 When determining the priorities for the use of the annual Capital Grant, the Academy will take into account the need to make the campus more accessible for staff and students with disability.
- 2.4 The Academy will budget annually for reasonable minor adjustments to the environment to enable a member of staff and/or a student with a disability to have access to the full teaching and learning of the Academy.
- 2.5 The Academy will bear in mind health and safety requirements and the interests of other students in all the above considerations.

3 Discrimination in Admissions

- 3.1 The Academy will ensure that disabled students and adult students are not discriminated against:
- through the criteria they determine for admission to the Academy, including criteria used where the Academy is oversubscribed; and
 - by refusing, or deliberately not accepting, an application from a disabled person for admission to the Academy.

4 Action on Transfer into the Academy

At transfer to the Academy, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled students and their families to ensure that the student's educational needs and the Academy's requirements are fully understood by staff at the feeder school, parents, and students, and to ensure that the transfer process is effective.

5 Policy for Teaching and Learning

5.1 Staff

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a regular basis.

Where necessary, support staff time will be allocated, relevant to the disabled member of staff's needs.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff.

Within the constraints of financial resources the Academy aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to teach effectively.

5.2 **Students**

In all teaching and learning activities a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no student is excluded from learning.

Teaching staff will be given, as relevant, advice from appropriate external agencies regarding the learning needs of disabled students, (such as the Sensory Impairment Service).

6 **Off-site Activities**

The Academy will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that students and staff with disabilities are given access to off-site activities organised by the Academy.

7 **Timetable for Implementing and Developing the Scheme**

Each Academy should include here its detailed arrangements for consulting staff, parents, students and others.

Appendix 3
The Disability Accessibility Plan

BELOW IS AN EXAMPLE.

The plan below should be completed by each Oasis Academy based on their own targets, strategies, outcomes, and timeframes etc.

Improving access to the Curriculum

	Targets	Strategies	Outcomes	Timeframe
Short Term	To plan the steps needed to make the curriculum and extra-curricular activities accessible to a wider range of students.	To implement curriculum reviews. To extend the range of extra-curricular activities. To review the SEN Policy and Inclusion Policy.	Developing 11-19 curriculum. More opportunities available to students with disabilities. New revised Policies.	Sept 2009 to completion in Sept 2010. Sept 2009 to Sept 2010. Sept 2009 and annual review.
Medium Term	To plan and implement improvements and adaptations to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.	To ensure all new developments comply with current law and regulations. To improve existing accommodation to more appropriate use. To increase the number of LSA staff to support students.	New academy building allows access for all students. Improved SEN facilities and wider access to ICT. Remodelling of the staffing structure.	Sept 2010 Sept 2010 Started Summer 2008
Long Term	To review short and medium term targets in the light of new opportunities and legislation.	To review the new curriculum arrangements and make changes where appropriate. To increase staff awareness of disabilities.	Incremental curriculum which builds on previous experiences. Wider ranges of teaching styles used (e.g. differentiation).	June 2009

Physical improvements to the environment

	Targets	Strategies	Outcomes	Timeframe
Short Term	To ensure all new buildings and alterations are	To discuss all plans with reference to	New buildings fully compliant with legal	Ongoing

	fully accessible to students with as wide a range of disabilities as possible	design and H & S requirements	requirements and guidance;	
Medium Term	Future decoration or buildings to cater for visually impaired students. To introduce ramps and handrails to existing buildings To improve signage to some areas of the academy	To take appropriate advice with reference to guidelines To conduct full audit of areas requiring ramps and handrails To incorporate this into Engineering Bid	Improved classroom decoration Improved access to areas requiring ramps and handrails Full access to new engineering facilities by disabled participants	From Sept 2009 onwards From Sept 2009 onwards From Sept 2009 onwards
Long Term	To make the whole academy site fully accessible	To look at the use of lifts, ramps, slopes and separate access for pedestrian and vehicular use.	Full involvement	Ongoing

Improving Provision of Information

	Targets	Strategies	Outcomes	Timeframe
Short term	To improve communication with disabled students/users To liaise with specialist staff with reference to different formats of information	To ensure the academy website is clear, simple and easy to use To ensure parents and students have wider access to information	Increased number of visits to website Increased variety of information available	Ongoing since Sept 2007 (under constant review) From Sept 2009
Medium Term	To consult with Disability information Service about the best way to make information available to users	To increase levels of awareness amongst staff responsible for information	Increased variety of information available	From Sept 2009
Long Term	To review progress made in short term and long term targets	To plan for the next stage	Wider understanding of issues involved	From Sept 2009 (ongoing)