

STANCHESTER ACADEMY ACCESSIBILITY POLICY 2016

Purpose

To ensure that the school complies, as far as is reasonably and financially practical, with legislation contained The Equalities Act 2010 and The Children's and Families Act 2015. Our aim is to maximise access to all parts of the school, its curriculum, as well as extra-curricular activities, to all adults, students and potential students.

Legal background.

The Code of Practice 2015 states that a child of compulsory school age or young person is disabled if he or she, "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."

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition." (SEN Code of Practice 2014 xviii. p.15)

"The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They **must** not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- They **must** make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is not anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage." SEN Code of Practice 2014 (xix. p.16-17).

Scope

It is the school's agreed policy that adults and students with a wide range of potential needs and requirements including those with mobility impairments, sensory impairments, mental health conditions, epilepsy, Aids, asthma and progressive conditions (e.g. multiple sclerosis) are not treated less favourably for a reason that relates to their disability. The school will be compliant with the applicable legislation in order to create an inclusive environment that promotes an equality of opportunity and removes barriers to learning in every aspect of school life.

This policy document should be read in consultation with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. The aims will also be encompassed in all school policy documents.

Policy Document**How**

The policy aims apply to all school staff, governors and volunteers working at the school. The attached plan provides details as to how the policy will be determined, implemented, monitored (success criteria) and the basis on which it will be reviewed.

Responsibility

The Governing Body has the overall responsibility for ensuring that there is compliance with this legislation. The Governors' Finance & Buildings Committee will have delegated responsibility for monitoring compliance.

Staff

The school subscribes to Somerset County Council Equal Opportunities Policy with regard to employment and will continue to endeavour to appoint the best candidates, regardless of any disability. The school will also make reasonable adaptations to retain staff in post who acquire a disability.

Physical Access Audit

A physical access audit will be carried out every two years and the results of the audit will be fed into The Access Plan. The school will be expected to take "reasonable steps" to ensure that disabled adults, students and prospective students are not placed at a "substantial disadvantage" compared to non-disabled adults and students.

School Trips

It is the agreed school policy that equality of access to school trips should be applied to all students if at all practicable. If applicable, accommodation will be booked to take account of students with a disability. Similarly, transport should be used which allows easy egress/entry for students with a disability. Where possible a learning support assistant will accompany students when deemed necessary.

Curricular Issues

Access to the curriculum will take account of students with disabilities. Alternative means are determined, for example in some forms of physical education, to ensure that disabled students gain experience and understanding of the area being covered.

The school statements on differentiation and special educational needs seek to remove barriers to learning and participation. Lessons will be organised to be responsive to student diversity and staff provide lessons in which all students can achieve. There are high expectations for all students.

Classrooms will be organised to maximise access and learning for all disabilities.

The Access Plan will be reviewed by the SENCO annually and at least every 3 years by the Governors' Finance & Buildings Committee to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the targets identified.