



The Skinners' School Disability Equality Policy and Scheme

1. Disability Equality Duty

1.1. General

The governing body recognises that the Skinners' School must take positive action to prohibit all forms of illegal discrimination. This obligation is towards staff, pupils and others associated with the Skinners' School (e.g. parents; users of the premises; visitors). The governing body aims not to treat disabled people using the Skinners' School's services less favourably than able people as far as is reasonably practicable.

In preparing and developing the Scheme the governors will have regard to any national guidance.

1.2. Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 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'.

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

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term as defined above.

The Disability Discrimination Act also covers those with:

- severe disfigurements;
- impairments controlled or corrected by the use of medication;
protheses;
an aid or otherwise;
- progressive symptomatic conditions;
- a history of impairment; and
- children under the age of 6 with impairments which, in an older person, would result in that person being covered.

Since December 2005 persons with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are also covered at the point of diagnosis.

But **excluded** are those with:

- an addiction to or dependency on:
nicotine;
tobacco; or
other non-prescribed drugs or substances;
- seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever); and
- certain mental illnesses with anti-social consequences.

2. The Governing Body's Duty

The governing body will discharge its responsibilities towards disabled staff, students and those using the Skinners' School's services by ensuring that disabled people are not treated less favourably in the following aspects as relevant:

- accessibility to the premises and facilities;
- accessibility to the curriculum;
- accessibility of associated educational services;
- training of staff and students;

The Skinners' School's policy is to:

- 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; and
- take steps to take into account people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment.

3. Accessibility Plans

The governing body's Accessibility Plan aims to:

- enable disabled staff to have reasonable access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable the needs of disabled visitors to the site are taken into account;
- increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the Skinners' School curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the Skinners' School in order to enable disabled students to take advantage of education and associated services;
- improve the delivery to disabled students within a reasonable time and in ways which are determined after taking into account their disabilities and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for students who are not disabled.

4. Unlawful Discrimination

The Skinners' School will ensure that discrimination is prohibited in:

- the selection and appointment and promotion arrangements for staff;
- staff conditions of service;
- staff training;
- the arrangements for determining student admission;
- the terms on which admission is offered;
- refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an admission application;
- provision of education or associated services (including educational visits and extra-curricular activities);
- exclusions;
- victimisation and harassment;
- failing to take steps to ensure that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled pupils in the arrangements for determining admission to the Skinners' School and in relation to the provision of education and associated services. However, alterations to buildings and the provision of auxiliary aids and services are not required under this law.

5. Students:

The Skinners' School values the full range of its students and seeks to ensure that its practices are fully inclusive. Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled students, while bearing in mind the interests of other students. The Skinners' School is required to make, under the terms of SENDDA 2001:

- improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled students;
- physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra-curricular activities); and
- improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled students.

There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not students with behaviour issues may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following may be underlying reasons for poor behaviour:

- mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy.

(N.B. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act. Other Skinners' School policies cover these areas.)

The Skinners' School will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled students in the Skinners' School.

6. Education and Associated Services

For students:

- preparation for entry to the Skinners' School;
- the curriculum;
- teaching and learning;
- classroom organisation;
- timetabling;
- grouping;
- homework;
- access to Skinners' School facilities;
- activities that supplement the curriculum e.g. a drama group visiting the Skinners' School;
- Skinners' School sports;
- Skinners' School policies;
- breaks and lunchtimes;
- serving school meals;
- interaction with peers;
- assessment and examination arrangements;
- discipline and sanctions;
- exclusion procedures;
- Skinners' School clubs and activities;
- educational visits;
- arrangements for working with other agencies;
- preparation for the next phase of education;
- administration of medicines;
- first aid.

7. The Scheme

Following its opening, the Skinners' School will consult with staff, students and families using the Skinners' School and with appropriate specialist advisors and community groups.

I. Aims

a) Staff:

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

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

b) Students:

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

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

The Skinners' School will ensure that its policies, procedures and plans support the following:

- 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.

c) Premises

The Skinners' School recognises that through the provisions of SENDDA 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).

However, to meet its obligations, the Skinners' School will ensure that the needs of disabled staff and students (and any adult users of the Skinners' School) are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the Skinners' School campus.

When determining the priorities for the use of the annual Capital Grant, the Skinners' School will take into account the need to make the Skinners' School campus more accessible for staff and students with disability.

The Skinners' School 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 Skinners' School.

The Skinners' School will bear in mind health and safety requirements and the interests of other students in all the above considerations.

d) Discrimination in Admissions

The governing body will ensure that disabled students including adult students are not discriminated against:

- through the criteria they determine for admission to the Skinners' School, including criteria used where the Skinners' School is oversubscribed; and
- by refusing, or deliberately not accepting, an application from a disabled person for admission to the Skinners' School.

e) Action on Transfer into the Skinners' School

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

II. Teaching

a) 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 Skinners' School aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to teach effectively.

b) 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 pupils, (such as the Sensory Impairment Service).

c) Off-site Activities

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

III. Harassment

The Skinners' School values each member of staff for their contribution to the Skinners' School and will seek to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable no member of staff is disadvantaged by reason of his/her disability.

The governing body will take positive action against any employee's harassment of another employee. All employees have a duty not to harass other employees on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognised by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Headmaster (or in the case of harassment by the Headmaster, to the Chair of the Governing Body).

IV. Liaison with Parents

The governors will report to parents annually on:

- the Accessibility Plan;
- how the governing body/responsible body helps students with disability gain access to the curriculum; and
- what the governing body/responsible body does to ensure fair treatment for disabled students.

The Skinners' School 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.

Whenever appropriate, information to home is provided in different formats to take account of disability.

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.

The Skinners' School, at least annually, will remind parents of the Skinners' School's Complaints Procedure

V. Timetable for Making and Implementing the Scheme

In the first year following its opening, the Skinners' School will consult with staff, students and families using the Skinners' School and with appropriate specialist advisors and community groups.

VI. Training

Appropriate training for staff and students will be included in an annual programme. In the case of students there will be units in appropriate areas of the national curriculum and in the PSHE programme.

VII. Staff Training

Training will be given to senior staff to ensure understanding of the DDA and SENDDA and how actions at Skinners' School level may be undertaken to ensure inclusion of disabled members of staff and students.

All staff (teaching and support staff) must attend training regarding duties to disabled members of staff and students under the DDA and SENDDA, and to attend up-dating sessions when deemed necessary by the Headmaster.

All teaching staff have regular training regarding improved practice in differentiation for all students including those with disability.

Regular staff training will be undertaken regarding the needs for learning of particular disabled students.

Support staff working with disabled members of staff and students will be given relevant training.

VIII. Responsibilities

a) Governing Body Education Committee

The governing body has established an Education Committee which has responsibility for equality of opportunity. :

- oversee the implementation of all the Skinners' School's policies and practices in this area, including Disability Inclusion;
- consider what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made;
- make recommendations to the Headmaster with a view to improving access to teaching and learning;
- consider the Skinners' School's systems and procedures for making staff, parents and pupils aware of the policies;

- consider the Skinners' School's Accessibility Plan; and
- review the Plan annually.

b) Headmaster's Responsibility

- to oversee the implementation of the policy and Scheme;
- to report progress as required to the governing body

Staff:

- o the Headmaster will report to the governing body regularly on members of staff who have a disability, and the steps taken to ensure that they are not treated less favourably;
- o the Headmaster will report regularly on the training provided for staff.

Students:

- o the Headmaster will report to the governing body on activities that ensure that reasonable adjustments have been identified and implemented;
- o the Headmaster will ensure that the Disabled Students Accessibility Plan is reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary, and report progress to the governing body;
- o the Headmaster will ensure that regular liaison with parents of disabled students takes place. Reports on these meetings and any correspondence with parents and students regarding their disabilities will be contained in the Headmaster's reports to the governing body.

IX. Monitoring, Inspection and Review

The governors will ensure that the working of the Scheme and Accessibility Plan is monitored. The Headmaster is required to report on progress (at least annually) The governing body will report to the local authority as required.

The governors recognise that these duties are monitored by OFSTED through their inspections.

X. Review

The Scheme will be reviewed and revised triennially by the governing body, or sooner if there is a clear need.

September 2009