

The Archbishop's School

# Accessibility Plan

2014

# **Accessibility Plan**

## **Accessibility, Equality and Diversity Statement**

### **Introduction**

The Archbishop's School is committed to ensuring that all students and staff are treated equitably and it has a long tradition of supporting students with a wide range of impairments. However, recent legislation has required us to improve further upon our provision and reappraise all our practices to ensure that they are not discriminatory.

### **The Legal Framework**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people, or people who have had a disability. Indirect discrimination where a provision, criterion or practice presents barriers is potentially as unlawful as direct discrimination. Reasonable adjustments must be considered fully before any decision is taken to justify less favourable treatment towards a student or member of staff. Discrimination is only lawful for 'substantial and material' reasons and in limited prescribed circumstances outlined within the DDA.

The Act defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment", which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

- "impairment" covers physical impairments and impairments affecting the senses such as sight and hearing. It also covers mental impairments, including learning disabilities and mental illness where the condition is controlled by medication or special aids the person is still considered as disabled for the purposes of the Act. People with stress related illnesses and conditions may be covered if there are long term, substantial and adverse effects. Those with other long term chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, upper limb disorders (e.g. Repetitive Strain Injury) or epilepsy may also have legal protection.
- "Substantial" means more than minor or trivial and includes progressive conditions where impairment is likely to become substantial, such as cancer or multiple sclerosis. People with such conditions are covered by the Act from the moment there is a noticeable effect on day-to-day activities, however slight.
- "Long-term" means effects, which have lasted for at least twelve months, or are likely to last for twelve months or more. Long-term effects include those which are likely to recur.
- "Day-to-day activities" are normal activities carried out by most people on a regular basis, and must involve one of the following broad categories: mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; the ability to lift,

carry or move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory of ability to concentrate, learn or understand; perception of the risk of physical danger.

## **Policies and Procedures: Students**

### **Teaching and Learning**

A number of materials are available to support members of staff in working with students with disabilities. Training is provided for staff in using a variety of teaching methods to help those with disabilities and this training occurs on a regular basis each year. There are also a number of support arrangements from the use of equipment in lessons to extra time in examinations. The school has a dedicated Visual Impairment Team, including trained Brailleists, and has specialist provision for students with Visual Impairment.

Resources are prepared in advance of lessons, and these can include Braille as well as large type worksheets and information. Where possible books are also purchased in large font.

Where appropriate students will also be provided with a laptop computer to help in their learning.

Students with visual impairment also have access to a widescreen TV to watch any TV or video resources either before a lesson or subsequent to the lesson.

Students with a disability are also assigned a key worker who will take a particular responsibility in helping the student to overcome any barriers to learning, including helping them with organisation, transition to secondary school as well as specific learning strategies.

### **Assessment**

The school puts in place a number of practical arrangements for examinations, including additional time allowances, the use of computers, the provision of papers in alternative formats, teaching assistants trained to act as scribes and the use of an alternative area for public examinations as well as school examinations. Progress of students with a disability is monitored by the leadership team with relevant information being passed to heads of house, the SENCO as well as subject and form teachers. Setting arrangements are carefully considered for those with a disability to ensure that the student is placed in the most appropriate group.

### **Physical Access**

Due to the physical layout of the school (five separate buildings constructed on a sloping site) access to some of the school is restricted for those for whom movement is impaired. However the school has taken action to improve some aspects of access. All steps are supported by handrails and white lining indicates edges.

Corridor doors open both ways to make access easier. Timings of the school day have been altered to reduce the amount of movement around the school, with a number of double lessons also reducing the problems associated with access. All new buildings have ramp access as well as stairs and there is a planned programme of increasing the number of ramps, especially for entry to the school through the main entrance.

For students with a disability there is the opportunity to move from one lesson to the next slightly ahead of other students to minimise risks and to enable them to arrive to lessons on time. We have also provided support for a pupil with visual impairment in the sixth form to have a guide dog at the school.

Students with a disability also have access to their own area of the school where they may complete homework or take part in the social club, or just have some quiet time. This is supervised at all times.

## **The Curriculum**

The school is committed to ensuring that the Curriculum available to non-disabled students is fully accessible to disabled students. PE provides some activities specifically for those with a disability so that all students have full access to the school curriculum. All students participate in the whole curriculum as much as possible and any withdrawal from lessons is taken in consultation with both parents/carers and the student.

At time additional classes may be provided specifically to help develop certain skills for those with a disability, for example in art. Where necessary, specialist equipment is provided to ensure disabled students are able to participate in all lessons, for example in food technology.

## **Staff Development**

Staff receive regular training in issues relating to disability, especially in relation to teaching and learning. Training takes place in three ways:

1. Through staff development days, using visiting speakers or experts to train some or all staff in specific areas of learning for those with a disability.
2. Through twilight sessions and workshops, usually relating to the needs of a specific student or group of students.
3. Through external training. For this year, this has involved staff development in partnership with Christ Church University College, Canterbury. This may be to develop skills in specific areas of disability and may lead to further or higher qualifications.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school will form an Accessibility Working Group with a membership drawn from across the school including students, members of the learning support team,

parents, SENCO and member of SLT to encompass all those with an interest in disability issues and those responsible for the delivery of services.

Their reports will be presented to the Governing Body which will decide which committee should monitor the different aspects of the report.

## **Discrimination and Non-Compliance**

All students are expected to treat disabled colleagues, staff and visitors with the same dignity and respect as their non-disabled counterparts.

## **Policies and Procedures: Staff**

### **Recruitment and Selection**

Consideration will be given to interview arrangements to ensure that a disabled person is not at a disadvantage compared to other applicants. This may include ensuring that the interview room is accessible for any applicants with mobility difficulties. Disabled applicants will be offered reasonable adjustments in relation to the interview process.

During the interview process, selection panels will be encouraged to assess how any disabled applicant can meet the requirements of the post, considering any reasonable adjustments which may be necessary and appropriate.

### **Training, Induction and Support**

Line managers will be responsible for discussing with disabled employees any individual needs they may have, such as additional induction requirements, particular equipment or car parking, and for ensuring that support is provided on an on-going basis, with regular assessment of whether needs are being met. The provision of reasonable adjustments should be reviewed by line managers during the academic year. Disabled staff will not be disadvantaged in their opportunities for training and development. Where appropriate, specialist training will be made available in order to allow them to develop their skills and career opportunities.

In cases where advice is needed on a medical condition or on the safety implications of recruiting a disabled employee, line managers will liaise with the Headteacher who may consult with the Occupational Health Service or other specialist agencies for guidance, as appropriate.

### **Disclosure, Confidentiality, Health and Safety**

In accordance with the Data Protection Act any information regarding a person's impairment is treated in confidence. All information collected for monitoring purposes will be kept in confidence, and all existing staff and applicants will be told that the information will be used only for Equal Opportunities monitoring purposes.

Individuals should be asked by their line manager whether they wish their colleagues to be informed of their disability status, and their wishes in this respect should be followed. If there are exceptional circumstances which lead the line manager to believe that non-disclosure of an impairment could cause a hazard to other employees, for example for health and safety reasons, then they should discuss the matter with the Headteacher. Any decision taken should be reported back to the individual disabled member of staff to whom it relates.

## **Working Environment**

The school is committed to making buildings and sites accessible, where this is reasonably possible, although it is recognised that there may be difficulties with some established buildings.

## **Disability arising during employment**

When employees become disabled during the course of their employment, all reasonable steps will be taken to accommodate the effects of their impairment by making adjustments to their existing employment, or through appropriate retraining and redeployment, enabling them to remain in employment with the school whenever possible.

The Headteacher will seek the involvement of the individual concerned, the school's Occupational Health Service and/or other appropriate specialist agencies, in order to assess the effects of impairment and explore possibilities for appropriate and practical adjustments. The line manager will be responsible for monitoring any adjustments to the working environment or the continued effectiveness of any equipment, in consultation with the individual disabled staff member.

## **Discrimination and Non-Compliance**

Everyone is expected to treat disabled colleagues, students and visitors with the same dignity and respect as their non-disabled counterparts.

Any form of harassment of a person with a disability on account of their impairment is unacceptable behaviour and is potentially unlawful.

All staff are required, by virtue of their terms of appointment, to become familiar with and understand the contents of the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. Disabled members of staff with a grievance are able to raise this grievance by following the school's Grievance Procedure.

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy and any action plans arising from it are to be monitored by the Accessibility Work Group.

Monitoring and review of all relevant policies within the school will be undertaken on a regular basis order to identify areas where change or improvements may be needed.

## **Channels of Communication**

- The first point of contact for individual members of staff is normally their line manager.
- If the matter is related to a health issue, or the individual wishes to maintain confidentiality in relation to a health issue, a Deputy Head or the Bursar may be contacted.
- The individual's line manager is responsible for ensuring that all matters relating to employment are dealt with appropriately. If an individual is unable to resolve an issue relating to their employment satisfactorily they should contact the Headteacher who will try and settle the issue informally. If the matter remains unresolved then the individual should consider if they wish to pursue their complaint via the Grievance Procedure.

## Action Plan 2014 -2017

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Progress
Improving access to the school for both parents/carers, visitors, staff and students	Adding slopes to areas where the only access is steps. To have moveable ramps to access main building and investigate the use of ramps or slopes for permanent access.	Steps at front of school to be replaced with a combination of steps and a slope.	Feedback and questionnaires	Annually	Deputy Headteacher	September 2014	Insufficient room for permanent slope to main building. Moveable ramp for access to school in use.
Improving accessibility for our visually impaired pupils	Ensure that all pathways and steps are edged in white. Fix handrails to staircases.	Paint white lines and fix/repair handrails	Governing body – Health and Safety	Annually	Deputy Headteacher	August and annually	All white lines in place. Yellow lines and markings in place. Handrails in place and marked for 2014.

Aspect of the duty	Issue being addressed	Action to be taken	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	How often will monitoring take place?	Who will be responsible for implementing the action?	Start date	Progress
Accessibility to appropriate toilets and washrooms.	Ensure that there are toilets and washrooms with handrails and lever taps for pupils with a physical disability or other need	Lever taps and hand rails fitted to identified toilet areas	Student feedback	Annually	Deputy Headteacher	August 2015	Designated disabled toilets are fitted with handrails and lever taps
Consult with parents/ carers and students	To identify further areas for development	Collect views of parents/carers/ pupils	Analysis of views, action taken	Annually	SENCO	December 2014	On-going – parent forum established to update SEN and Disability Policy
Teaching and learning	Ensure issues around disability are featured in the school PSHEE programme	Update schemes of work. Ensure all students have access to PSHEE lessons by a re-organisation of the timetable to include KS4/5 PSHEE	Student feedback and questionnaires	After appropriate topics covered	Head of PSHEE	Sept 2014	Schemes of Work reviewed for teaching September 2014. To be reviewed July 2015.