



## **G5.3 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DISABILITY POLICY**

### **Aim**

- the Downs School aims to provide education for boys and girls and encourage individual potential in a stimulating environment with sound moral values
- the school aims to equip all its pupils with the educational and personal skills to provide a foundation for future learning, irrespective of individual abilities or disabilities.
- the school is committed to equal opportunities (see Employment Handbook for Staff Equal Opportunities) and will do what it can to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils or staff are not placed at a substantial disadvantage or treated less favourably in comparison with non-disabled pupils or staff. Parents pupils or staff will be included in discussion about possible adjustments to normal procedures.
- school policies, including those for Admissions, Learning Support, Anti-Bullying and the PSHE programme all emphasise the commitment to provide a rich and inclusive educational experience for all pupils.
- at The Down's we want everyone to have access to the education or opportunities available. This should not be limited without justification, by the abilities of others in the school and, in making appropriate adjustments to arrangements for a child or member of staff with a disability the school will act in accordance with its moral and legal responsibility to ensure that this is the case. We are able, depending on need to arrange for children to use laptop computers in classes, and for example, for large print documents to be given to those with impaired vision.
- reference to disabled people includes disabled children, young people, staff and adults as pupils, employees, governors, parents, carers and other members of the wider community that might use the school premises for leisure or other activities. The definition of disability as stated in the Equality Act 2010 is a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities. It covers a broad spectrum of

impairments including; cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, HIV, multiple sclerosis, hearing or sight impairments, mobility impairments or people with mental health conditions or learning difficulties/disabilities. The school will take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty) in matters of admissions and education.

The Downs School is committed to providing equality for all children, their families and staff and takes positive action to avoid discrimination in all areas of work and play. We aim to ensure that every pupil and member of staff is given an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential. Each individual at our school is entitled to learn, teach and work in a supportive environment.

We **aim** to;

- Promote positive self image, respect individuality and provide for all pupils and staff irrespective of race, gender or disability
- Ensure an equality of provision and opportunity that permeates the whole curriculum
- Ensure that our curriculum contains non-stereotypical images in order to overcome preconceived ideas of gender, ethnic origin, culture or religion
- Include resource material and equipment that are multi-cultural, non-sexist and provide a positive image of all groups, including the disabled
- Acknowledge the richness and diversity of our British society and help prepare pupils for their place in the world
- Develop a positive attitude to equal opportunities amongst the whole school community
- Acknowledge the festivals and celebrations relevant to our pupils, their families and the wider world
- Challenge any discriminatory remarks by pupils, parents or other adults working in our school and emphasize that discrimination is not tolerated
- Give opportunities for pupils to explore, acknowledge and value similarities between themselves and others.

Our Policy for Equal Opportunities and Disability should be read in conjunction with the policies for PHSE, Bullying, Administration of Medicines, Child Protection and Behaviour, as they work closely together to ensure that equal opportunities and support are the right of each pupil at this school.

### **Admission procedure**

- in order to assist the school to understand the needs of a child with a disability, parents will be asked to outline their child's condition and special needs at the time of applying for a place
- parents will be invited to discuss their child's needs with the Headteacher so that all parties can assess how well the school can meet the child's needs. We recognize that some disabled pupils may also require specialist

- support from our LSU and we will discuss this with parents before entry to school. However, we acknowledge that not all pupils are disabled by their SEN and vice versa.
- in the course of the assessment procedure, the school, whilst being sensitive to requests for confidentiality, may take advice and require further assessments as it deems appropriate.
  - due allowances will be made in the educational assessment of the child with a disability, such as giving extra time during examinations or in the application of the marking scheme.

### **Accessibility**

The Downs School is a single campus set on a level site. The buildings reflect the development of the school over more than a century and are within easy reach by foot, although access to some parts does involve stairways, steps and slopes. Buildings vary from single storey to three floors, some of which contain several staircases and some narrow corridors. There are no lifts. It is normal practice for pupils and staff to move within and around the buildings and to be taught in classrooms and in specialist rooms, with appropriate subject resources. The school has an active monitoring policy and will do its best to make adjustments to take account of an individual's needs, within the constraints imposed by its buildings on a scattered site. We are progressively improving facilities for disabled access and wheel chair users as our buildings are upgraded.

### **Medical Provision**

The school has a medical centre that is open during the school day so that medical help can be summoned immediately. The matrons receive any relevant medical record prior to a pupil or new member of staff joining the school and are always happy to discuss individual health problems with parents as well as the management of any medical or physical condition.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

- all staff must be made aware of the needs of each pupil or staff member and especially those with a disability
- staff are required to do all that is reasonable to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity
- when making decisions regarding adjustments which may be desirable to accommodate the needs of a disabled pupil, or member of staff, the needs and rights of the other pupils and staff must also be considered.
- without being patronizing or diminishing the experiences of other children, staff must be sensitive in their choice of words, topics and teaching strategies.
- in the teaching and daily routine, staff must give consideration to the acoustics and layout of the room where pupils are seated and to the placing of any special equipment, such as laptops or magnifiers.
- teachers must be sure to differentiate tasks so that pupils are set practicable tasks, to avoid exclusion from activities through disability.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- the Bursar will oversee a review of Health and Safety policies and provision and access to the school facilities as they might affect pupils or staff with a disability. The school acknowledges its duty of care under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act which requires a three-year Accessibility Plan. It regularly updates and reviews this policy.
- the Leadership team and Head of Department's will discuss how teaching strategies and resources might cater for a pupil or member of staff with a disability or particular need and ensure all staff are made aware of these.
- the Leadership team will consider implications for recreational and sporting activities and make recommendations about the means to improve accessibility to the educational provision whilst ensuring that relevant policies are met.
- the Headmaster and Bursar will report back to the Leadership team

<b>This policy was adopted on</b>	<b>Signed on behalf of the School</b>	<b>Date for review</b>
<i>06/03/18</i>	<i>H Fulton and H Walker</i>	<i>05/03/19</i>