

Policy No 45: Accessibility Policy



Rationale

Neptune School has created an inclusive community in which each person is respected and recognised as of equal value. We aim to ensure that everyone remains safe and stays healthy, whilst at the same time enjoys and achieves and makes a positive contribution to the wellbeing of the school and wider community. We are committed to the care and well-being of all Students so that they may work and learn in a safe, secure environment. In all aspects of the school, the stakeholders (governors, staff, Students, parents/carers) are committed to working together to ensure that the school community remains true to the equal value principle underpinning its policies. All new policies and protocols are carefully examined to ensure access and equality in diversity. The premise of equality, of 'opportunity in diversity', is based on the principle of respect for the individual. Over the last four years all new buildings have included disabled access, and this will continue to be the case moving forward.

We address each person's unique, academic, physical, emotional, or social needs. All members of the school community work together to create an atmosphere in which each member is valued and can flourish regardless gender, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, socioeconomic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation, or other relevant distinction.

Students have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum; attention is given to resourcing and the development of an appropriate environment to meet the needs of individual Students and groups within the school community. The language used in the school community, spoken, or written, fosters a positive attitude to each individual, group and the wider community.

At present we do not have any EAL Students; should any Students with these needs be admitted provision will be made as necessary.

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1. Responsibilities

The Disability Equality Duty (2006) requires schools to be proactive in promoting disability equality and eliminating discrimination; this has now been superseded by The Equality Act of 2010. Neptune School continues to develop their ability to provide an inclusive, accessible environment for Students, staff, parents, carers, and other professionals.

We aim to meet the five outcomes of the Children Act (2004) and have regard to the general duty to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities
- encourage the participation of people with disabilities

Regular reviews of our strategic improvement plan and annual reviews of all policies ensure the school's inclusion of Students with disabilities meets all aspects of the law. The School Leadership Team ensures that all policies, practices, protocols and provision have regard to the Disability Equality Duty and the Equality Act of 2010, which extends protection from discrimination to people with what are termed, 'protected characteristics' in almost every area of life. The Director of Education and Head Teacher are responsible for ensuring the implementation of all policies and the full development of a strong ethos of inclusion, within all aspects of the life of the school.

It is the duty of all staff, and everyone working in the school to implement the policies and continue to develop inclusive practices.

2. Complaints

Students, carers, and staff have access to the school's Complaints Procedures; these are also available to Social Workers and parents. Students may go through their tutors, through other Students, or SLT. Complaint forms are available in different formats to suit a range of abilities and Students, or staff can be aided to complete these as necessary.

3. The Accessibility Plan

This plan addresses the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and refers to individuals who are disabled (both current and prospective) in a wide sense, including those with special educational needs, and with temporary or permanent physical disability. It also deals with access issues for disabled staff and visitors.

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA): “A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.” The SEN and Disability Act (2001) extended the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) to cover education and entered in the SEND Code of Conduct, 2015.

- Not to treat disabled Students less favourably for a reason related to their disability.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled Students, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage.
- To plan to increase access to education for disabled Students, where such improvement to access has been identified.

Should increase access be identified as a concern, then the school will produce an Accessibility Plan that identifies the action the school intend to take over a three-year period to increase access for those with a disability in three key areas. This will be published and evaluated annually.

The three areas are:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled Students can participate in the school curriculum.
- Improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled Students can take advantage of education and associated services.
- Improving the delivery to disabled Students of information which is provided in writing for Students who are not disabled

4. Key Objectives

- To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for Students and prospective Students with a disability.
- To provide a caring and friendly environment.
- To provide resources that meets the needs of the individual Student and supports them towards developing independence.
- To promote an understanding of disabilities throughout the school and an awareness of the needs of Students with a disability.

5. Staffing

Staff recruitment and employment decisions will be made based on fair and objective criteria. This is in line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. We are committed to ensuring that, within the framework of the law, the school is free from unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of gender (incl. gender reassignment), colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, marital status, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances, sexual orientation, or other relevant distinction. The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have, or have had, a temporary or permanent disability will be reviewed regularly to ensure that whatever reasonable adjustments are possible are made to allow them to enter, or remain in, school employment. Where new health needs are identified for existing staff, the appropriate staff are informed, and every effort is made to support the staff member and promote their safety and well-being. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited, and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff can participate fully. Short term mobility needs are considered and, where necessary or appropriate, help and guidance will be given.

6. Education

The school provides all Students with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual Students and their preferred learning styles; and endorses the key principles in the National curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum:

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to Students' diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of Students.

Staff work hard to meet the needs of all Students with regards to accessing the curriculum and are supported by the Senior Leadership Team all aspects of school life. Each Student is viewed as an individual, supported in their progress towards as fully as independent and achieving future, as possible.

7. Language and literacy for EAL Students

Please see additional EAL policy for accessibility arrangements for students with EAL.

8. Legislative framework

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance, namely:

Equality Act, 2010

Children Act, 2004

The Disability Equality Duty, 2006

Human Rights Act, 1998

The Equality Act 2010 and schools Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, DfE, May 2014

Advice on standards for school premises For local authorities, proprietors, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies, DfE, March 2015

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2021

SEND Code of Conduct, DfE, January 2015

Promoting the education of looked after children, DfE, July 2014

Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, March 2015