



DISABILITY EQUALITY

(Includes Accessibility)

Policy version control:

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The Leadership Team and Governors of the Academy recognize the importance of creating a positive environment for disabled students and staff and are committed to making this a reality in our Academy.

This scheme has been written within the context of the Academy's commitment to create an inclusive community that welcomes and celebrates diversity as an enrichment of the lives of all members of that community.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Disability Equality Duty

The purpose of this Disability Equality Scheme is to ensure that the Academy delivers its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. In order to do this and ensure involvement of staff and students it is important to understand the key principles of the legislation and what is meant by disability.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduces a new duty to promote disability equality for education providers. The new law extends the requirements of the DDA 1995 by requiring public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Eliminate disability-related harassment.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
- Take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others.

These six elements are known as the general duty and aim to create positive attitudes and a proactive response to Disability issues. Preparation of a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan is part of the specific duties relating to education providers.

1.2 Disability Definition

It is important to recognise that the Disability Discrimination Act covers a wide range of disabilities and our scheme is designed to take account of this. The definition of disability includes:

- Physical or sensory impairments
- Mental health difficulties
- Learning disabilities or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- Medical conditions such as Alzheimer's Disease, diabetes and cancer

To fall under the definition of the Act this impairment must have:

- A substantial, adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- Be likely to last for more than 12 months

For more information on the Disability Discrimination Act, including further examples under this definition please refer to the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) website:

www.equalityhumanrights.com

2. About Stoke High School

2.1 Background

Stoke High School was built in 1977 as the first purpose-built comprehensive school in Ipswich at the time of secondary re-organisation in the town. It became an Ormiston Trust Academy in October 2013. The Academy serves the Stoke Park area, which is mainly private housing, the Maidenhall housing estate and the old Stoke area of the town. Stoke High School converted to an Ormiston Academy in October 2013.

The Academy has 750+ students 11-16, with a significant number of out of area applications.

The Academy has developed an outstanding reputation for the pastoral care and concern for all students and the support which it offers to those of all abilities to achieve success.

The facilities of the Academy are available to adults as well as young people through the letting of the premises. The Academy seeks to be closely involved with the community and to serve that community as fully and effectively as possible.

2.2 Our Approach

The Academy is committed to developing and promoting an inclusive community.

We enjoy very positive and close relationships with our cluster of primary schools and have been recognized for our work on transition, which includes early links where students' physical, emotional or educational needs may require special provision.

We are committed to the well-being of staff and believe that for everyone to be effective, individuals need to be treated as such and supported in ways that suit them.

There are nominated governors who monitor the care given to students with Special Educational Needs, Looked After Children, and disabled students and staff. The Assistant Principal oversees the Learning Support Team that includes teachers, HLTAs, Learning Support Assistants (some of whom are trained in manual handling), and Learning Mentors. All staff undergo School Safe and Child Protection training and we have appropriate and regular programmes of training related to disabilities experienced by the Academy population.

Communication, planning and decision-making is carried out in the Academy through calendared meetings of interlocking teams:

School Team	Meetings
Leadership	Weekly
Pastoral	Fortnightly
Year Teams	Monthly
Faculty Teams	Monthly
Staff meeting/training	Termly
Learning Support	Weekly/monthly
Governors' Committees	Meetings
Full Governing Body and Committees	Once per term
Student Discipline	As needed
Hearings	
Appeals	

3. Strengths and Successes

3.1 Accessibility

A plan is complete so that all curriculum and administrative areas are accessible to those with mobility problems. A lift enables wheelchair access to the three levels of the main Academy building. Disabled parking is available in two places to ensure easy access to the main parts of the Academy and Community Library.

3.2 Specialist equipment

The Learning Support department has access to a variety of ICT equipment. Individual equipment is purchased according to need (adjustable tables/writing slopes).

ICT equipment can be provided for dyslexic staff as well as any further support required.

3.3 Provision of Support to Learners/SEN

There is good forward planning to address transition issues beginning in Year 5. A pro-forma distributed to cluster primaries in September each year is returned to indicate current levels of need.

All students are screened on admission using standardised measures of Reading, Spelling and Non-Verbal Reasoning as well as standardised Reading and Spelling scores. The results of this screening informs provision and is available to all staff.

Learning support is delivered according to need. The lightest touch is in-class support available to designated learners.

The SENCO has a meeting with the Educational Psychologist in the Autumn Term where individual student concerns are raised and referrals agreed.

The Department has access to support and advice from Outreach professionals at Thomas Wolsey including Occupational Therapy and Manual Handling, and the Inclusive Resource for Autism.

Good channels of communication exist between the department and Community Paediatricians and CAMHS professionals.

3.4 Staff Development and Training

The Department delivers training to students, NQTs, support staff and teachers on topics relevant to our intake.

First Aid and Learning Support staff receive training as appropriate on caring for those with epilepsy, allergic reactions, diabetes, and other medical conditions.

3.5 Curriculum Activities

Subject and curriculum leaders carry out regular monitoring to ensure that materials and schemes of work develop positive images of all groups in society.

Members of staff are made aware that all activities must be accessible to all members of the Academy community.

PSHE schemes of work include activities that focus on developing awareness and positive images of disability as do Drama, English and RE.

3.6 Student Council

All students have access to the Student Council through form representatives on the Year Councils, each of which is represented on the School Council.

4. Challenges and Issues

4.1 Funding

The Academy has made good use of the Access Initiative Grant and already has a lift. Further work to meet the needs of students and visitors is in hand.

4.2 Disability information

If appropriate, questions are asked in staff interviews about the need for any specialist equipment or arrangements. The Induction Interview with new staff would include questions about the appropriateness of support.

Admission forms request information about students' needs and will have an additional area for parental needs to ensure these are met.

4.3 Fire Evacuation procedures

Access to the assembly points is straightforward. Additionally, support staff have copies of student timetables and will escort students to their area. Students/staff with stair mobility problems, if on the first floor, go to Room 212 and will be assisted from the building.

4.4 Training

Our training provision is comprehensive and up to date, students' needs are anticipated and training is provided. Heads of Faculties notify the Learning Support Department of any specific needs.

4.5 Accessibility

Issues around work experience are discussed early in the year and appropriate arrangements made.

4.6 Web based information

Advice re access and information about provision and how to request specific arrangements such as recordings, Braille documents and parents' evening arrangements, will be on the new website.

4.7 Advice and Guidance

The Learning Support Team works closely with the Integrated Team, 6th Forms schools and colleges, parents and students from Year 9 onwards, to ensure a smooth transition at 16+.

5. Involvement

The Academy's partnership arrangements with cluster primary schools, Suffolk New Academy, the South and West Ipswich Clusters, SWISS, as well as other OAT Academies mean that there are many opportunities to consult, learn from each others' experiences and cascade good practice.

The Academy works closely with the Integrated Team.

We have developed work with the Library Service to gain understanding and involvement with stakeholders in the development of the Academy's and Library's practice.

6. Gathering Information

Gathering information is part of our responsibility to demonstrate how we deliver in relation to Disability Equality.

The starting point for this is to encourage staff and students with disabilities to tell us about them. We intend to involve the School Council in understanding and developing the Scheme and in seeking the views of disabled students not on the Council.

6.1 Student Information

Students' SEN files are transferred from previous schools and are held in the department office. They include copies of Statements where appropriate, previous Individual Education Plans, reports from Advisory Teachers and/or other external agencies and assessments.

The initial screen information is added to SEN files and to SIMS, which all staff can access. For students who are not on the SEN Register this is stored in their main file with their Head of Year.

A register of students with SEN is kept electronically and is available to all staff who are informed of any updates.

6.2 Staff Information

Equal Opportunities information is captured on our monitoring form as part of the recruitment process. This includes a section on disability. Our existing data shows that no member of staff considers themselves to have a disability.

7. Communicating our Policy

The Governors and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the policy.

The Policy will be published on the Academy website and held in hard copy in the School Policies file.

Y7 TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEN

September annually:

- Pro-forma completed by Cluster Primaries to identify future SEN in Years 2 and above.
- Year 5 students with particularly exceptional needs identified at Cluster Heads' Meeting.

Spring Term annually:

- Assistant Principal visits Cluster Primaries, meets students in groups, then individually.
- SENCO visits individual students with SEN who are known to be joining us from other Primaries and attends Annual Reviews in Year 6.
- Learning Support Department meets with SENCOs of feeder primary schools to discuss SEN students and pass over files.
- SENCO arranges visits to Academy for identified groups of Y6 students.
- Learning Support Department staff are fully involved in Y6 Induction Day.
- SENCO collates information on Y6 SEN students. This is shared with all staff and informs Y7 SEN Register.
- SENCO (or Assistant Principal) is available for private discussion with parents.
- Admission Interviews with Y6 parents - parents of all students with SEN are seen by members of the Learning Support Department or the Assistant Principal.
- SEN information is passed to the Assistant Principal.

Transition period September annually:

- All Y7 entrants are screened using a variety of assessment tools and according to need. Results are added to assessment folders for access by all staff and are used alongside all other information to inform interventions.
- All files are transferred from Primaries. SENCO holds SEN files.

Ongoing:

- Via termly Pyramid SENCO Network, SENCO seeks invitation to Y6 Annual Reviews.