



The Grangefield Academy Disability Policy & Accessibility Plan

Name of Chair of Governors

John Copping

Date Approved

March 2015

Next Review Date:

April 2016

INTRODUCTION

From September 2002, if a child has a disability and has been discriminated against in education, the parents may be able to challenge this under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The DDA defines disability as “a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to perform normal day-to-day activities”. For example, if a child has problems with mobility, seeing or hearing, learning disabilities, mental health problems, epilepsy, AIDS, asthma, diabetes or a progressive condition such as multiple sclerosis, then he or she may be covered under the DDA. Also included are dyslexia, dyspraxia and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

1. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as follows:

“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.”

2. KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objectives are to

- reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum
- ensure full participation in the academy community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

3. PRINCIPLES

Compliance with the DDA is consistent with the academy’s aims, its equal opportunities policy and the academy’s SEN policy.

The academy recognises its duty under the DDA (as amended by the SENDA):

- not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services
- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- to publish an Accessibility Plan.

In performing their duties, Governors and staff will have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002).

The academy recognises and values parents’ knowledge of their child’s disability and its effect on his or her ability to carry out normal activities, and respects the parents’ and child’s right to confidentiality.

The academy provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of individual pupils and their preferred learning styles, by:

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

4. ASPECTS TO DISCRIMINATION:

4.1 Less favourable treatment

An academy may be discriminating if it treats a child “less favourably” for a reason related to his or her disability, and it cannot justify that treatment.

For example:

- refusing a child’s application for admission because of his or her disability
- refusing to let a child go on an academy trip because he has diabetes

In some cases, the academy may be able to justify treating a child “less favourably” if it can show that it did so for a material and substantial reason. This means that the reason must relate to the child’s particular case and be significant enough to justify discrimination. Less favourable treatment may also be justified if it is the result of a permitted form of selection.

4.2 Failure to take reasonable steps

The academy can also be accused of discrimination if it does not take “reasonable steps” to ensure a disabled child is not at a substantial disadvantage compared to the other pupils at the academy.

For example:

- a secondary academy fails to make the arrangements necessary for a child to be able to sit public exams
- a deaf pupil who lip-reads is at a substantial disadvantage because teachers continue speaking while facing away from him to write on the board
- a pupil with dyslexia is told she cannot have her teacher’s lesson notes, and that she should take notes during lessons “like everyone else”.

The DDA does not require academies to provide ‘auxiliary aids and services’ such as sign language, interpreters or information formats such as Braille or audiotape. Academies do have a duty under the DDA to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, for example by providing interpreters at parents’ evenings.

4.3 Improving access

Academies should gradually implement plans to improve access for disabled children. These plans should include:

- improvements in access to the curriculum
- physical improvements to increase access to the academy buildings
- improvements in information in a range of formats for disabled children, including Braille, audiotape or large print formats.

Academies should make these plans available to parents.

Academies are expected to take “reasonable steps” to meet the needs of disabled children who might become pupils, taking into consideration the broad range of needs of pupils with different disabilities. However, this does not include making changes to academy buildings to make them accessible, or providing specialist equipment or support.

Academies should review their policies, practices and procedures regularly to ensure that disabled children are not at a disadvantage because of their disability.

5. ACADEMY ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2009-2012

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in ‘Accessible Academies: Planning to increase access to academies for disabled pupils’, issued by the DfES in July 2002.

5.1 Introduction

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It draws on the guidance set out in ‘Accessible Academies: Planning to increase access to academies for disabled pupils’, issued by the DfES in July 2002.

5.2 Definition of Disability

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as follows:

“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.”

5.3 Key Objective

To reduce and eliminate barriers to access to the curriculum and to full participation in the academy community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

5.4 Principles

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6. ACTION PLAN

6.1 Education and related activities

The academy will continue to seek and follow the advice of appropriate health and education professionals.

6.2 Physical environment

The academy will take account of the needs of pupils and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour schemes, and more accessible facilities and fittings.

6.3 Provision of information

The academy will investigate local services for providing information in alternative formats when required or requested.