

# West London Academy Disability Equality Statement



## Introduction

1.1 West London Academy is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement as stated in its Equal Opportunities Policy Statement. The Academy recognises that choices have to be made between individuals using proper criteria, for example: pupil/student admission, staff selection and is opposed to any unnecessary barriers being created. Applications for people with disabilities to join the Academy community, as pupils/students, staff and governors are welcomed.

As part of its commitment to the local community and to the Mission Statement, the Academy believes the widest definition should be adopted. The Academy defines disability as “the loss or limitation of opportunities for people with impairment(s) to take part in society on an equal basis with others due to social and environmental barriers. Impairments or individual medical conditions of any kind, whether they have resulted from injury, illness or birth, become a disability because of the social and physical barriers to independence and equal opportunities faced by people with disabilities.”

1.2 West London Academy is committed to full compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, and through its Disability Equality Statement gives prospective pupils/students an outline of the provision of services and facilities available for persons with disabilities. The statement contains information on current policies, support and facilities currently available, and an outline of future plans to improve provision.

1.3 The Academy aims to further improve its accessibility and provision for people with disabilities in order that they may participate fully in Academy life and will continue to address this aim in strategic planning.

1.4 This policy details the Academy’s position in relation to:

- publicity and information
- the environment
- health and safety
- recruitment and admission of staff and pupils/students
- assessment and examinations
- student support
- implementation and monitoring
- staff development
- confidentiality

1.5 The Academy recognises that implementation of this policy has resource implications and will identify resources and limitations in annual budgeting processes.

1.6 Whilst wishing to increase access and support it is not the Academy’s intention to confer any legal rights upon individuals other than those detailed in appropriate legislation.

## **2) PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION**

2.1 In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, the Academy will publish its Disability Statement on the Academy website to give pupils/students and staff and prospective pupils/students and staff an outline of its Policy and Provision for pupils/students and staff with disabilities.

2.2 The Academy will ensure that recruitment material clearly states that applications from prospective staff and pupils/students with disabilities are welcome.

2.3 Information materials such as prospectuses will, where appropriate, include details of the availability and limitations of support/facilities for people with disabilities.

2.4 Minimum design standards will be set for 'official' web pages to ensure that they are disability-friendly.

## **3) THE ENVIRONMENT**

3.1 The Academy believes that currently its working and studying environment is fully accessible to people with disabilities and has, at its centre, the John Chilton Special School for pupils/students with physical and/or medical disabilities. Facilities within the Academy specifically to aid those with disabilities include

- physiotherapy, occupational and speech and language therapy rooms
- a hydro-therapy pool
- wheelchair accessible lifts
- disabled toilets
- fully accessible wheelchair provision to all accommodation both indoors and outdoors within the Academy
- full-time medical support
- an attached education social worker
- a high level of ICT and support for aided communication
- disabled access minibuses to enable access to a wider curriculum and for school trips.

3.2 In accordance with this, all planned maintenance and new building projects will be cross-referenced with the standards for Disability Access Reports in order to identify suggested improvements to accessibility.

3.3 All new building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities. Current building regulations require a specified level of access for people with mobility problems. Furthermore, the Academy recognises that compliance also takes into account the needs of people with other disabilities. In line with good practice all new building plans and major refurbishment will be evaluated by a specialist in disability access and facilities. This is to ensure that the opportunity for improvement to any building is maximised to produce an environment that is usable by the greatest number of people. In the long term this will be a cost saving device to prevent corrections having to be made to poorly planned facilities.

3.4 Property which the Academy leases or rents is assessed for accessibility.

## **4) HEALTH AND SAFETY**

4.1 Academy health and safety procedures offer clear advice and procedures to address the needs of people with disabilities, in particular the evacuation procedures.

## **5) STAFF WITH DISABILITIES**

5.1 The Academy Recruitment Policy and procedure enables applicants with disabilities to provide information on their needs and takes account of any special arrangements that may be necessary. Any discussion of support requirements is separate from consideration of the applicant's suitability for the post applied for. All candidates will be considered on their abilities. All staff involved in recruitment and selection are fully aware of the Academy's requirements.

5.2 The Academy will make reasonable changes to work practices and, where possible the workplace, to enable disabled people to work successfully, including those members of staff who become disabled whilst employees

5.3 Advice and support on the employment of disabled people will be given by the HR Department, in conjunction with external agencies.

5.4 Person specifications for each post, including the specific physical requirements, will be drawn up before posts are advertised.

## **6) PUPILS/STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

### **6.1 ADMISSION PUPILS/STUDENTS**

6.1.1 Pupils/students with Disabilities will be admitted to the Academy as outlined in the Academy's Admissions Policy. The Admissions Policy will ensure that selection will be made using proper criteria.

The Academy recognises that not all its courses are available to all its learners, for example pupils/students at the John Chilton School may be partial integrators rather than full time in some instances, and where, for example, national guidelines indicate that certain physical competencies are required

### **6.2 ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM**

6.2.1 As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled pupils/students will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods in new courses of study and in the evaluation of existing ones.

6.2.2 Where a course is organised in such a way that a disabled student cannot fully participate, for example on field trips alternative methods of achieving the objective of this part of the course will be developed wherever possible.

6.2.3 Teaching staff will take steps to ensure that their teaching style and approaches do not create any unnecessary barriers or difficulties for pupils/students with disabilities who they may teach.

6.2.4 The Academy ensures that mechanisms exist which enable disabled pupils/students to discuss with a member of Academy staff any course-related problems which arise as a result of their disability, in order to resolve such difficulties.

6.2.5 The Learning Resources Centre specifies the steps they take to take account for the different needs of pupils/students with disabilities.

6.2.6 The IT Network Department and departmental-based computing provision takes into account the different needs of pupils/students with disabilities. This includes types of software as well as providing seating and desking for wheelchair and other disabled users.

6.2.7 The Academy IT Network Department takes into account the advantages IT can offer people with disabilities and where possible installs equipment and provides training to exploit these advantages.

6.2.8 Any future teaching and learning strategy or policy will take into account the learning needs of pupils/students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties.

6.2.9 West London Academy recognises that the studies of some pupils/students are affected by specific learning difficulties including dyslexia. The Academy has developed policy statements and practical guides addressing the provision and support for such pupils/students.

6.2.10 Curriculum Areas take all reasonable steps to ensure that course materials are available in a variety of formats, with particular emphasis on web-based materials on the internal Learning Gateway, for pupils/students who require it.

### **6.3 ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS**

6.3.1 The Academy recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable pupils/students with disabilities including specific learning difficulties to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge

6.3.2 The Academy Examinations Registrar therefore aims to provide an examination environment which will enable such pupils/students to perform to the best of their ability and will tailor examination arrangements to individual need, subject to resource limitations.

6.3.3 In order to ensure parity of experience for pupils/students, the Examinations Registrar will ensure that provision is consistent across all curriculum areas, recorded and reported to Examination Boards before and after examinations, and has developed procedures to ensure this.

6.3.4 A Procedure is in place that sets out the responsibilities of both the Academy and the pupil/student to enable special arrangements to be made. Pupils/students will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations.

### **6.4 PUPIL/STUDENT SUPPORT**

6.4.1 The Academy will endeavour to meet the accommodation requirements of pupils/students with disabilities, where possible further adapting accommodation to individual need.

6.4.2 The Academy will attempt to maximise student awareness, particularly those in post-16, of the existence of the Disabled Student Allowance. The Academy recognizes that some students with disabilities will have additional expenditure.

6.4.3 The Academy will ensure that student support services provided by the Academy are accessible to pupils/students with disabilities.

## **7) CONSULTATION**

Students through the various School Council meetings, the Infant, Primary and Student Leaders Programmes, House system and daily focus group meetings with the Principal all have a role to play in contributing to this statement on disability equality. The Academy's application and assessment for the Quality Inclusion Mark standard further supports the whole Academy community's commitment to disability and other forms of inclusion.

## **8) IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

8.1 This policy will be implemented through the Academy's Improvement Planning and Quality Assurance programme with specific aims identified and monitored as part of the Annual Improvement Planning processes. A member of the Academy Leadership Team is designated as having responsibility for the setting and monitoring of targets, in conjunction with other senior leaders.

8.2 This Policy should be embedded within all planning and review procedures by the Academy, including those of Curriculum Areas, Student and Family Services, Access and Inclusion, SaFE Teams and Building Services.

8.3 The implementation of this Policy will be monitored on behalf of the Board of Governors by the Vice Chair of Governors, on advice from the Academy Governors Education Sub-Committee and the Director of Access and Inclusion.

## **9) STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

9.1 The Academy will ensure that a programme of training is offered to staff to familiarise themselves with and enable them to fulfil the requirements of the policy.

9.2 The Vice Principal – Development and Operations will also offer staff training programmes to increase awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities.

9.3 Consideration of this policy forms part of the induction and development sessions for new staff and Newly Qualified Teachers to the Academy.

9.4 Disability issues are a part of all induction programmes.

## **10) CONFIDENTIALITY**

10.1 Care needs to be taken that an appropriate degree of confidentiality is maintained.