

E-ACT POLICY

PARKWOOD ACADEMY

Access & Disability

Date agreed by Governors	
Date of review	
Responsible officer	Principal / Business Director

ACCESS AND DISABILITY POLICY

General Principles

In recognition of the justice of equality for all within and outside the institution, the Academy has a duty to prepare all of our students to play a fulfilling and dignified role within society, building upon the strengths of the equal contributions of all citizens to such society. Such strengths and contributions are irrespective of disability. The values promoted and actively modeled in everyday relationships and attitudes displayed are an integral feature of our educative purpose that must permeate the practices of the Academy as a reflection of the culture of the organisation. As such, the following statements have significant implication for key individual post holders, Faculties and the Houses of the Academy.

Ethos

The governors require positive support and cooperation by students, parents and staff for these values, which are deemed central to the development of the culture of the Academy. The ethos of the Academy should be one that reflects the needs of all its students, staff and the local community. All students and members of the community are potentially affected by prejudice focused upon disability but it is often those in greatest need who are disadvantaged in society. As such, prejudicial treatment of those with any form of perceived disability has no place in a civilized society.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in the physical environment. The physical environment of the Academy should be accessible to all and designed with care so as not to reinforce negative stereotypes, nor to denigrate or ignore the needs of those with physical disabilities. Indeed, the environment should provide an opportunity to challenge prejudicial assumptions. The design of facilities and amenities for educational and recreational times should reflect the Academy as an inclusive environment, offering a conscious and positive opportunity for access to space and in the use of such space.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our values. Equality of opportunity for those with perceived disability should be promoted through form time and PSHE. Assemblies should take account of the achievements and leadership of such citizens in society and in faith. PSHE programmes should take care not to reinforce stereotyping or prejudice. Opportunities should be sought to provide for those in our local community with disabilities for which the Academy might be a source of educational or recreational value.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our activity. A wide range of activities should be offered to students and staff irrespective of disability. Care must be taken not to effectively exclude students or staff from activities because of any disability. Resourcing must facilitate curricular access appropriate to any disability issues; e.g. Consideration of visits or journeys, provision of sports, technological or recreational activity, which adaptation of procedures or provision of specialist equipment may reasonably be secured.

The ethos of the Academy is reflected in our procedures and relationships amongst staff and students. The Academy Access and Disability policy should be made explicit to new employees, as well as to parents and carers of all students at the Academy. Inappropriate responses to issues of disability will be subject to the relevant disciplinary procedures.

The organisation and administration of the Academy should not reinforce unnecessary divisions by perceived disability. Staff should be sensitive in their methods of grouping students and avoid inappropriate divisions unless they are particularly relevant to the students needs. In particular, having few students disabilities in the Academy, departments should be sensitive to the impact of their groupings in such terms and individuals should not be isolated as a result of class groupings.

Abuse or Harassment

Areas of potential abuse or harassment include physical assault, verbal abuse, unwanted attention or patronising behavior.

a. Action on such issues is guided by two major principles, which apply to staff and students alike, supported by an appropriate form of constructive dialogue with those concerned.

- To protect the victim of such attacks
- To make a strong and immediate response in such a way as to make the Academy's position clear. i.e. that such behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

b. In the event of disability-based harassment or abuse by a member of staff, such actions will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Code of the appropriate Conditions of Service.

Language and Practical Support

a) We need to be aware of the fundamental role which language plays in conveying values. It is important to try to ensure that the words we use do not betray unconscious bias or ignorance.

b) Awareness raising of the definitions, characteristics and issues involved in individual disabilities should be a feature of staff development, the selection and deployment of resources and the design of the physical environment.

c) The Academy will employ a trained Welfare Officer, supporting where possible the individual needs of disabled students and staff and with particular focus upon their well-being.

Curriculum

a) Staff should be aware that their own expectations and attitudes towards disability play a crucial role in student integration, performance and achievement,

b) The curriculum should endeavor to avoid all discrimination and disability stereotyping and make equal entitlement a key focus. There is a particular need to raise awareness given that an inevitable numerical imbalance within the Academy may lead to a potential isolation of individual students with disabilities.

c) Faculties and Houses should monitor their facilities, practices and procedures to ensure that they lead to genuine of opportunity for all students, specifically including equality of access to all areas of the curriculum and specific topics within Schemes of Work.

d) Teaching strategies should be developed which enhance a positive self-image for all students, with particular emphasis placed upon provision of appropriately adapted resources.

e) Assessment procedures should avoid disability bias, with alternative forms of assessment being deployed wherever possible.

f) Provision of extracurricular activities should not disadvantage any student.

Resources

a) All Academy-generated resources and visual materials should avoid stereotyping and should depict all citizens as equally involved in all roles of society, irrespective of perceived disability.

b) Literature by disabled authors, with disabled people as central characters in non-stereotypical roles, should be positively sought.

c) The choice of purchase and deployment of all Academy resource, facilities and accommodation design must take active cognizance of their suitability for compliance with this policy, e.g. changing facilities, toilets, and laboratory equipment.

d) Care should be taken to ensure that appropriate time and adapted resources are allotted to disabled students for the use of resources such as computers or technological equipment.

Staff and Governor Appointments

The issue of equality amongst the whole community of the Academy should be viewed positively. Whilst the prime and clear consideration in making an appointment is that the best person for a post should be appointed, it is important that the balance of employees and governors should reflect the value attached to this policy at all levels and, other factors being equal, this may be a relevant factor in decision-making.

Monitoring

The effectiveness of this policy of Equality of Opportunity is the responsibility of the Principal, reporting to the Local Governing Body through committee reports which contain the outcomes of monitoring of the policy. Such routine monitoring duties are assigned to the.

- Vice Principal, (Standards & Delivery) in respect of the curriculum.
- Vice Principal (Performance Management & Staff Development) in respect of personnel matters.
- Assistant Principal (Assessment, Recording & Reporting) in respect of learning outcomes.
- Assistant Principal (Students & Community) in respect of reportable incidents and the participation of disabled students and community groups in Academy activity.
- Property and Contracts Manager in respect of the Physical Environment.

However, responsibility for the implementation of the Academy's Access and Disability policy must be shared by ALL colleagues in the interests of the nurturing of a positive environment in which all students, families and employees can feel valued and are able to achieve their full potential.

