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Disability Policy

Scope and publication

This policy applies to all staff and pupils at all Anthem Schools Trust (the Trust) schools and all others within the school community. This policy is available on each school website and can be made available in large print or other accessible formats if required.

Aims

- To afford equal opportunity to employees, pupils and other persons with disabilities.
- To ensure compliance with equality legislation including the Equality Act 2010; and
- To have a regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, *What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools*.

Related policies

- Accessibility Plan
- Whole-School Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy

Policy statement

We will:

- Maintain and drive a positive culture towards inclusion of all people with disabilities in all the activities of the school and foster positive attitudes towards disability within our school community.
- Train staff to understand the different types of disabilities and how to act and/or assist people with disabilities including how to administer medicines in line with our Administering Medicines Policy.
- Educate staff and pupils to understand different types of disabilities and how to act and/or assist people with disabilities.
- Adopt user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of children with a disability and consult with those parents about the reasonable adjustments which can be made to ensure that the admissions process is accessible for their children.
- Implement and review the Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the school's curriculum, improving the physical environment of the school and improving access to information for our employees, pupils and prospective pupils and their parents.

Definition of disability

A person has a disability (a person who has the protected characteristic of disability) if they have a physical and/or mental impairment which has ‘a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

Further details

- ‘Long-term’ means an impairment that is likely to last for the rest of the person’s life or has lasted at least 12 months or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months. If the person no longer has the condition but it is likely to recur or if the person no longer has the condition, they will be considered to be a person with a disability.
- There is no need for a person to have a medically diagnosed cause for their impairment; what matters is the effect of the impairment not the cause.

Physical disabilities

These can be grouped into physical and/or sensory needs and includes conditions that affect the body such as arthritis or epilepsy and hearing or sight impairment (unless this is correctable by glasses or contact lenses), as well as HIV infection, cancer. Physical disability also includes severe disfigurement, such as scarring, even if it has no physical impact.

Emotional and mental health disabilities

These can be grouped into communication and interaction, cognition and learning or social, emotional and mental health conditions. Conditions such as dyslexia and autism, learning difficulties resulting from Down’s syndrome or mental health conditions such as depression and schizophrenia are therefore covered by this terminology.

Disability does not include

- hay fever sufferers
- a person with anti-social tendencies such as paedophilia
- a person who has a behavioural difficulty, for a reason other than a disability, for example, arising from social or domestic circumstances
- a person who is addicted to nicotine, alcohol and other non-prescribed substances unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment.

SEND Code of Practice 2014

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) recommends a ‘graduated response’ to identifying and removing barriers to learning in order to put effective education provision in place. Using the cycle of plan, do, review and assess teachers will adapt provision to cater for all levels of learning.

Universal interventions will be promoted widely as this involves high quality teaching for all, with differentiation in response to pupil need.

Targeted support: some pupils will be selected to participate in small group interventions in order to ‘close the gap’ with their peers.

Specialist support requiring input from external professionals will be organised for the minority of pupils with specific or exceptional needs.

The SENCo involves parents in discussions at all stages, from identification of a SEND need, to the development of individual support plans and requests and review of Education and Health Care plans. The school will work with parents to apply to the local authority if there are pupils with exceptional needs that require a very high level of additional support.

Discrimination

We will not knowingly discriminate against a person with a disability:

- in the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures
- in the terms on which a pupil place or staff position at the school or Trust is offered
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment
- in the provision of education and associated services
- in the way the Trust affords access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the Trust or our schools
- by excluding or dismissing a person on the grounds of his or her disability
- by harassing a person with a disability
- by victimising a person with a disability
- by failing to take steps to ensure that people with a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people without a disability.

Admission procedure for pupils

Admission procedure

Our schools are open to applications from any prospective pupil with a disability. Our schools will treat every application from a prospective pupil with disability in a fair, and open-minded way.

Informing the school

The registration or admission form will enable the parents to give details of their child's disability. The school will, if appropriate, request from the parents or the previous school full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the potential pupil's disability so that the school can make an assessment of the reasonable adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs.

Education and associated services

The Trust has an ongoing duty to make Reasonable Adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life. The range of activities that are covered by the expression include:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- access to school facilities
- school sports
- school meals

- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the serving of school meals
- assessment and examination arrangements
- school discipline and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, educational visits and other activities
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- recruitment and selection of staff.

Recruitment and selection procedures

The Trust and our schools are open to applications from any prospective person with a disability. We will treat every application from a prospective candidate with disability in a fair, and open-minded way.

Reasonable Adjustments for persons with a disability

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to allow pupils and adults with disabilities to access the educational provision, related services or workforce.

We shall inform the pupil and parents or any adult with a disability of the Reasonable Adjustment(s) that we are legally required to make for them, which may typically include:

- making arrangement for a pupil or adult in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room
- allowing extra time for a pupil or adult with dyslexia to complete an entrance exam or written documents
- providing examination papers in larger print for a pupil with a visual impairment
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil or adult to attend a class or event in an accessible part of the building
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

We are not legally required to make physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, such as a new library.

Accessibility plans

Each of our schools have prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available on their school website, and on request, to all parents and staff.

The Accessibility Plan includes consideration of how the school proposes to:

- Increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the school's curriculum or adults with a disability may be included in the workforce.
- Improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils or adults with a disability are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.
- Improve the delivery to pupils and adults with a disability of information which is readily accessible to pupils and adults who do not.

The Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that the Plan is up-to-date and covers all aspects of school life. For further details please refer to the school's Accessibility Plan.

Monitoring and review

We will monitor and evaluate the impact of this policy by reviewing the number of complaints, the number of bullying incidents, the number of pupils, parents, Local Governors and staff with disabilities within the school community, and the attainment and career progression of pupils and staff with disabilities. The Headteacher will report the results of this evaluation to the Education Director annually.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.