



Head of School: Mr P. Coiffait

School Policy

Accessibility

Governors adopted this policy on:

Signed by the Chair:

To be reviewed on:



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SCHOOL STATEMENT

Hawthorns strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school are such that, whatever the abilities and needs of members of the school community, everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Pupils should be provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and value diversity.

Definitions

"A person suffers a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial or long-term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and learning difficulties. The definition also considers certain medical conditions when they have a long-term and substantial effect on pupils' everyday lives.

At Hawthorns we recognise that we must:

- Fulfil our duty under the Disability Discrimination Act ('95) as amended by the SENDA (2001);

"From September 2002, it will be unlawful for schools and LEA's to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions, education and associated services".

Associated services being:

- * *Preparation for entry to the school;*
- * *The curriculum;*
- * *Teaching and learning;*
- * *Class organisation;*
- * *Timetabling;*
- * *Grouping of pupils;*
- * *Homework;*
- * *Access to school facilities;*
- * *Activities to supplement the curriculum;*
- * *School sports;*
- * *School Policies;*
- * *Break and lunchtimes;*
- * *The serving of school meals;*
- * *Interaction with peers;*

- * *Assessment and exam arrangements;*
- * *School discipline and sanctions;*
- * *School clubs and activities;*
- * *School trips;*
- * *The school's arrangements for working with other agencies;*
- * *Preparation of pupils for the next stage of education.*

- Ensure that we do not treat disabled pupils less favourably;
- Ensure that we take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage (the 'reasonable adjustment' duty);
- Ensure that the Governing Body publish Accessibility Strategies and Plans;

Overall Planning Duty

There are three main strands of planning duty:

- **To improve the physical environment of school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and associated services;**

This strand of the planning duty covers aids to improve the physical environment of the school and physical aids to access education. The physical environment includes things such as steps, stairways, kerbs, exterior surfaces and paving, parking areas, building entrances and exits (including emergency escape routes), internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor covering, signs and furniture. Aids to physical access include ramps, handrails, lifts, widened doorways, electromagnet doors, adapted toilets and washing facilities; adjustable lighting, blinds, induction loops and way-finding systems.

Physical aids to access education cover things such as ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens, and key boards, concept key boards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and potable aids for children with motor co-ordination and poor hand/eye skills, such as extra robust scientific glassware and specialist pens and pencils.

- **Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in schools' curriculum;**

This strand of the planning duty will help to improve access to a full, broad and balanced curriculum. It covers a range of elements including ensuring that teaching and learning is accessible through school and classroom organisation and support, especially deployment of staff, timetabling, curriculum options, and staff information and training.

Schools will be expected to plan to improve progressively access to the curriculum for all disabled pupils although many adjustments to access will be dependent on individual needs and may be provided through the SEN framework. The accessibility strategies and plans will help to ensure that schools are planning and preparing to respond to the particular needs of individual pupils.

- **Improve the delivery of information to pupils with disabilities:**

This part of the planning duty covers planning to make information normally provided by the school in writing - such as handouts, timetables, textbooks, information about school events - available to disabled pupils. This will include alternative formats such as Braille, audiotape and large print and also the provision of information orally, through lip speaking or sign language, through a recognised symbol system or ICT. This information should also be made available within a reasonable time frame and take account of the pupils' disabilities and pupils' and parents' preferred formats.

Related School Policies:

Equality for disabled pupils is included as an explicit aim in all our policies and is supported by other policies such as:

- * Teaching and Learning
- * Equal opportunities Policy
- * Behaviour Policy
- * Admissions Policy/ criteria
- * School Improvement Plan
- * Policy for Pastoral Care
- * Policy for Outdoor Activities
- * SEN Policy
- * Exclusions

Aims and Objectives:

Hawthorns aims to include all pupils, including those with disabilities, in the full life of the school. Our strategies to do this include:

- Having high expectations of all pupils;
- Finding ways in which all pupils can take part in the full curriculum including sport, music and drama;
- Planning out-of-school activities including all school trips and excursions so that pupils with disabilities can participate;
- Setting admissions policy and criteria which does not discriminate against pupils with disabilities or treat them unfairly;
- Devising teaching strategies which will remove barriers to learning and participation for pupils with disabilities;

- Planning the physical environment of the school to cater for the needs of pupils with disabilities;
- Raise awareness of disability amongst school staff (teaching and non-teaching) through a programme of training;
- By providing written information for pupils with disabilities in a form which is user friendly;
- By using language which does not offend in all its literature and make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language;
- By examining our library and reading books to ensure that there are examples of positive images of disabled people

Guidelines:

Actions to ensure equality for pupils with disabilities:

1. We shall undertake an audit of specific needs
2. The audit will identify targets in the following areas:
 - 4Building requirements
 - 4Resources needed
 - 4Individual Education Plans for learning;
3. An action plan will then be drawn up covering all of the above and made known to all teaching and support staff, pupils and parents;
4. The Governing Body will report how targets have been met in their annual report to parents (and what impact they had on the achievements of pupils with disabilities);
5. The Disability Access Co-ordinator, staff and Special Educational Needs Governor will monitor and further develop good practice;

Monitoring procedures:

We recognise that monitoring is essential to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning. We will monitor:

- Admissions
- Attainments
- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Effects of pastoral strategies
- Rewards and sanctions
- Exclusions
- Response to teaching styles/subject

- Setting/groups
- Effects of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies
- Extra-curricular activities
- Homework
- Selection and recruitment of staff
- Governing Body representation
- Parents attending consultation meetings
- Parents' involvement in the life of Hawthorns (attendance at parents' evenings/meetings, in the classroom, productions, sports day, summer fair etc)

Useful Documentation

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| • Accessible schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils | Issues to all schools June 2002 (DfSE Publications) |
| • Schools Disability Codes of Practice | Disability Rights Commission |
| • SEN Code of Practice | DfES |
| • DfES Guidance on Inclusive Schooling | DfES |
| • National Curriculum 2000 Inclusion Statement | DfES |
| • DfEE: Access for disabled people to school buildings | The Stationary Office |