

Durston House

Accessibility Policy

Aim of the Policy

- to state the school's commitment to making, wherever possible, the provision of education accessible to all

Objectives of the Policy

- to reduce and eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum
- to promote full participation in the school community for current and prospective pupils with a disability
- to complement the school's **Strategic Plan (separate document), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy (SEND), Equal Opportunities Policy – Pupils, Curriculum Policy, Admissions Policy, Egression Policy (all in School Handbook)**

Introduction

Disability is defined by the Equalities Act 2010 in the following way:

“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”.

This policy has been drawn up with reference to legislation detailed in the Equality Act 2010, Part 3 of the Children's and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Regulations 2014. This legislation provides guidance relating to disabled children and young people (0-25 years), as well as those with SEN. This policy has also taken into account statutory guidance found in the SEND Code of Practice (0-25years), the Handbook for the Inspection of Schools – the Regulatory Requirements (February 2016 Independent Schools' Inspectorate) and the school's Admissions Policy, Egression Policy, Curriculum Policy, Safeguarding Policy, SEND Policy and the Accessibility Plan.

The Governors and staff of Durston House are committed to the reduction and elimination of barriers which prevent access to the curriculum and to full participation in the school community for pupils and prospective pupils with a disability. Compliance with the Equality Act is consistent with the school's ethos and mission, and the operation of its SEND Policy. Since September 2002, the Governing body has three key duties towards disabled pupils, under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act:

- to treat SEND pupils as favourably as other pupils
- to make reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage
- to plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

Durston House has few pupils on the roll with significant physical disabilities, but it recognises that to develop knowledge and skills, the physical environment may have to be adapted, enabling the school to provide for these pupils. However, when allocating resources, priority is given to meeting the needs of the majority of current pupils.

Principles of Accessibility at Durston House

The school recognises its duties to SEND pupils.

- Policies for admission and exclusion do not discriminate against disabled pupils.
- The provision of education and associated services does not discriminate against disabled pupils.
- Disabled pupils are treated as favourably as other pupils.
- Reasonable steps are taken to avoid putting disabled pupils at substantial disadvantage.
- An Accessibility Action Plan is in place.
- An Individual Progress Plan (IPP) is created, where appropriate.

The school values parents' knowledge of their son's disability and its effect on his ability to carry out normal activities.

- The school respects the right to confidentiality of parents and their sons.

The school provides all pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the learning needs of individual pupils.

- The advice of LEA services and appropriate Health Authorities will be sought, as appropriate, when admitting and supporting a pupil with disabilities.

Responsibility for Accessibility at Durston House

- The **Governing Body** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.
- The **Senior Management Team (SMT)** is responsible for ensuring that the principles of this policy are reflected in the school's Ethos and Mission, its Strategic Plan, the academic and complementary curricula, and that staff training is appropriate.
- The **Director of Studies** has responsibility for the SEND Policy, in conjunction with the **Head of Learning Support**.
- The **Head of Learning Support (SENCO)** has responsibility for the day-to-day provision for SEND pupils provision and for ensuring the implementation of the SEND aspects of the Action Plan.
- **Teachers**, where appropriate, supported by **Teaching Assistants**, are responsible for meeting the individual needs of all pupils within their classes, including those with disabilities.
- The **Bursar** is responsible for the implementation of the physical improvement aspects of the Action Plan.

Educational Activities

Durston House seeks to remove all barriers to learning and participation by pupils with disabilities. The school has had experience in developing a range of strategies to meet academic, emotional, behavioural and medical needs. Lessons provide opportunities for all pupils to achieve and to learn in different ways and Teachers and Teaching Assistants have the necessary training to teach and support disabled pupils, as the need arises. Outings, trips and extra-curricular activities are open and accessible to all pupils, as far as possible, with reasonable adjustments being sought.

Physical Environment

The school has separate sites for the Pre-Prep, the Junior School and the Middle and Upper Schools. It uses the local church hall for large gatherings such as Assemblies, workshops, productions and after-school activities. Two separate playing field sites, with pavilions, are used on a daily basis.

Durston House acknowledges that not all parts of the school are easily accessible to wheelchair and other disabled users. The Main School and Pre-Prep buildings are Victorian and currently have limited disabled access. The Junior School is recently refurbished, making it fully accessible, as are the two pavilions. The church hall has adequate disabled access and facilities.

The school recognises that, in meeting the needs of a pupil with a physical disability, it may need to make adaptations to the environment. These would need careful consideration and with due regard given to the possible significant disruption to the effective operation of the school.

Hitherto, the school has not needed to respond to children with permanent mobility disabilities. Given the nature of some school buildings and the complexity of split sites, prospective parents should be aware of the potential for limited access and mobility which disabled pupils might encounter. Before a boy were admitted with a mobility disability, the school and the parents would make an individual assessment of the barriers to his full access to the education provided, and the feasibility of his attending Durston House.

Provision of Information

Durston House makes every effort to ensure that information is presented in a way that is user-friendly for pupils with disabilities. The school uses services/providers for converting written information into alternative formats, should the need arise.

Action Plan

The **Action Plan** sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of Durston House to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Equalities Act 2010. These are:

- to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum.
- to improve the environment of the school, increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services.
- to improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils, that is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

The Action Plan:

- is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.
- informs the school Strategic Plan and links to school policies.
- informs the annual maintenance and refurbishment programme.
- is available in printed form on request from the school.

Attached at **Appendix 1** is the **Action Plan** showing how the school has identified and addresses the priorities in the Accessibility Policy.

Pupil Data and Audit

Durston House gathers and analyses information about disabilities annually. Such information is available in **Appendix 2**

Evaluation of this Policy

This policy will be evaluated by the school every three years, amended where necessary and approved by SMT.

<i>Created</i>	<i>Jan 2005</i>	<i>JMT</i>	<i>Version 1</i>
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