
DISABILITY & DISABLED ACCESS

PREFACE

Chiltern Hills Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We encourage every person in our community to:

Create, Aspire and Excel to 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

We achieve this through our dedication to the seven Christian values of love, hope, self-discipline, compassion, forgiveness, respect and honesty.

We are a community in which staff, students and parents work collaboratively to develop a learning environment and organisation which is spiritual, safe, innovative, creative and exciting. All members of the Academy are motivated and inspired by the vision to give their best and to play a full part in the life of the school and in their own developing lives.

The Governors at Chiltern Hills Academy are committed to achieving the vision and values. They oversee and monitor this policy to ensure that this is being achieved.

1 LEARNING AND TEACHING

1.1 Classroom Management

To enable fluent access to the curriculum, features of classroom management will include:

- Classroom organisation to include seating arrangements and proximity of other students detailed to assist
- Appropriate consideration during timetable construction
- Awareness of disability levels for particular students in each teaching group
- Undertake advice and direction from the Director of Learning Support
- Modify assessment criteria as required
- Employ differentiation and alternative teaching strategies to maximise curriculum access
- Utilise Teaching Assistants that have been trained for each of the main categories of disability
- Teachers and assistants including technicians to have been trained in manual handling techniques for each of the main disabilities
- Action in an emergency e.g. evacuation.

1.2 Classroom Facilities / Equipment

To support the range of operational teaching methods, curriculum access will further consider:

- Classroom layout
- The use of IT/interactive whiteboards etc.
- Teaching materials available in a variety of formats to meet specialist needs through written/audio/pictorial materials
- In practical based subject including technology, science, expressive arts and physical education, faculties to determine specific strategies to permit equal curriculum access and experience to match those of all other students.

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2 STAFF

2.1 PROSPECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS

Prospective staff members should notify the school of any disabilities as part of their application and should discuss with the school what adjustments could reasonably be made to accommodate them. The school may request a full report from a doctor or Occupational Health to help determine whether it can properly fulfil its legal, moral and contractual responsibilities to the prospective staff member, its students and their parents/carers.

2.2 EXISTING STAFF MEMBERS

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing staff members which may require adjustments to be made to the way in which they are employed. Existing staff members must, as soon as possible, disclose to the school in confidence any known medical condition or health problem. Where appropriate, the Principal shall set up a consultation process so that interim measures can be put in place to support the staff member, and that longer term requirements may be determined. The school will, to the best of its ability, make such adjustments as are reasonably practicable to allow a staff member to continue working successfully at the school.

2.3 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The school shall endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to aid a prospective or existing student/staff member. Such adjustments may include (but not limited to):

- Installing low gradient ramps for easy access on the ground floor;
- Allocating a classroom on the ground floor;
- Specialist seating or any other relevant classroom resources or equipment.

In defining what is reasonable, the school shall take into account:

- The cost and feasibility of making specific alterations to the school premises;
- Implications on financial resources and the likelihood of any external funding being available to offset this;
- Staffing requirements;
- Health and safety considerations;
- The interests of students, staff and visitors.

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3. PREMISES SUITABILITY

3.1 Circulation and Premises Access

As a result of the developments at the Academy, in conjunction with Adult Learning and following the Disabled Access audit (2006), the following have been installed and are compliant with disabled access: access to the building, handrails, ramps, lighting and signage. An induction loop has been installed in reception.

4. LETTINGS

Letting organisations have a responsibility to ensure they understand the Academy facilities and do their own assessment for suitability. They will be reminded of their responsibility to undertake Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). (See Lettings Policy)

5. THE DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT (DDA), SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability

Generally, impairments have to meet the statutory requirements set out in section 6 and Schedule 1 to the Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability is usually considered cumulatively in terms of:

- identifying a physical or mental impairment;
- looking into adverse effects and assessing which are substantial;
- considering if substantial adverse effects are long term;
- judging the impact of long term adverse effects on normal day to day activities.

Statutory guidance on the Equality Act 2010 definition of disability has been produced by the Office for Disability Issues (within the Department for Work and Pensions) to help better understand and apply this definition - <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/new/ea-guide.pdf>

The clear starting point in the statutory guidance is that disability means **'limitations going beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist among people'**.

'Substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. Substantial adverse effects can be determined by looking at the effects on a person with the impairment, comparing those to a person without the impairment, to judge if the difference between the two is more than minor or trivial.

'Long term' means the impairment has existed for at least 12 months, or is likely to do so.

'Normal day to day activities' could be determined by reference to the illustrative, non-exhaustive list of factors in pages 47 to 51 of the statutory guidance relating to the Equality Act 2010. **(Study and education related activities are included in the meaning of 'day to day' activities.)**

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The guidance from the Office for Disability Issues referred to above illustrates the factors which might reasonably be regarded as having a substantial adverse effect on normal day to day activities. Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect are also provided.

Factors that might reasonably be expected to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- persistent and significant difficulty in reading and understanding written material where this is in the person's native language, for example because of a mental impairment, a learning difficulty or a sensory or multi-sensory impairment;
- persistent distractibility or difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty understanding or following simple verbal instructions;
- physical impairment – for example, difficulty operating a computer because of physical restrictions in using a keyboard.

Factors that might reasonably be expected not to have a substantial adverse effect include:

- minor problems with writing or spelling;
- inability to read very small or indistinct print without the aid of a magnifying glass;
- inability to converse orally in a language which is not the speaker's native spoken language.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2010 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All Academy examination staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

Special Needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENDCO and the Educational Psychologist/Specialist Teacher.

The SENDCO will inform Subject Teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that examination. The SENDCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the examination.

The SENDCO/Exams Officer will take the lead in making access applications based on their close knowledge of the needs of students under their care. They will produce a list of the students involved together with their concessions and this list will be available in all exam rooms in the files.

Any complaints made by candidates with disabilities should be directed in the first instance to the Examinations Officer who will initiate an enquiry.

Access arrangements

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of the

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SENDCO.

- Completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies are made on line by the Examinations Officer.
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer in consultation with the SENDCO.
- Support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCO.
- All areas have had internal risk assessments carried out.
- The Exams Officer should be notified if there are any exceptional health issues.
- Any specialised equipment will be provided.
- Invigilators will be briefed of any exceptional issues concerning communication or other factors which may affect the candidate.
- Recruitment of invigilators will follow normal school policy with regards to disabled applicants.
- All invigilators will either receive group training including disability issues or will work alongside an experienced invigilator.
- The SENDCO will make the Exams Officer aware of any issues concerning individuals in the main exam rooms.

Type of Disability or Disadvantage

| Type of Disability or Disadvantage | Centre Solution |
|--|---|
| Wheelchair user | The main exam rooms are on the ground floor, but should a candidate need access to upper floors we have a lift. There are also Evac chairs should we need to evacuate a wheelchair user from the upper floors. |
| Use of crutches for broken leg or other lower limb complaint | The main exam rooms are on the ground floor, but should a candidate need access to upper floors we have a lift. There are also Evac chairs should we need to evacuate a candidate from the upper floors. |
| Broken arm / collar bone / finger or other such complaint | The Centre will arrange for candidates to have a Scribe, laptop and/or extra time for the exam. |
| Generally feeling unwell | The Centre may be able to arrange for the candidate to sit the exam in a room on their own (invigilation staff permitting) and candidates will be allowed rest breaks of up to 10 minutes at a time without penalty to the overall exam duration. |
| Visual disability | All exam rooms in the Centre are well lit. Candidates are permitted the use of their coloured film overlays as required. |
| Hearing disability | Candidates may have the use of a live speaker for pre-recorded exam components, or a sign language interpreter. Candidates will be accommodated in a room on their own. |

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| Long term illness or disability | Candidates with long term illness or a disability that makes travel to the Centre difficult may be allowed to sit their exams at home, or hospital with permission from the individual exam boards . |
| Learning disabilities | Candidates within the Centre are assessed and permitted the use of a Scribe, Reader and/or Extra Time as recommended by the Centre's SENDCO. |
| Medication | If any candidate needs to take regular medication, invigilators will make this possible. |

When conducting exams at Chiltern Hills Academy, the Head of Centre and Examination Officer will follow the checklist below:-

Checklist for heads of centre and examination officers – The Equality Act 2010 and conduct of examinations:

A Training invigilators

- 1 Ensure that invigilators are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in disability issues.
- 2 As part of the training process make sure that invigilators are aware of policies and procedures relating to emergency evacuation and medication, especially where they relate to candidates with a disability.
- 3 Ensure that invigilators are aware of alternative means of communication, especially in the exam room when conveying information to disabled candidates.

B Information for candidates

- 1 Ensure that information supplied to candidates with a disability, such as JCQ Information for candidates, are suitably sized and adapted.

C Seating arrangements

- 1 Make sure that there are chairs available outside the examination rooms to enable those with a disability or those candidates who experience extreme stress or anxiety, to sit and rest before they enter the examination.
- 2 Ensure that there is sufficient space between desks and chairs to enable a candidate (or an invigilator) who uses a wheelchair to enter and leave the room without difficulty.
- 3 If you know that a candidate may become unwell during the examination due to the nature of their disability, try to ensure that you seat them close to the exits to make them feel more comfortable and to limit any disruption to others within the examination room.
- 4 Ensure that the seating is both appropriate and comfortable for those who may have a disability which affects sitting and posture.

D Candidates requiring access arrangements

- 1 Where a candidate has been granted the use of an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe, ensure that those individuals who will be acting as an Oral Language Modifier, a reader or a scribe

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- are introduced to the candidate prior to the examination(s) taking place. This is particularly important for those candidates with autism, who will find it difficult to relate to someone who is a stranger.
- 2 Where a candidate has been granted supervised rest breaks, try to ensure that the rest areas are suitably comfortable as well as maintaining the security of the examination. Supervised rest breaks will apply to those candidates who suffer from fatigue, hyperactivity, obsessive compulsive disorders or long term health conditions.
 - 3 Where a candidate has been granted the use of a prompter, it is important that the person appointed to act as a prompter is aware of disability etiquette, particularly when touching the candidate's desk as a means of a prompt, or tapping the candidate's arm or shoulder. This will apply to those candidates with autism who may have difficulty with time.
 - 4 For on-screen tests, ensure that hardware and software have been adapted for those candidates with a sensory or multi-sensory impairment.

E Emergency Evacuation Procedures

- 1 Invigilators and all other centre staff involved in conducting examinations **must** be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures in place for those candidates with a disability who may need assistance in leaving the building.
- 2 When evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to candidates, attention should be given to those candidates with a disability, for whom such procedures may be different.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed when there are changes in the law or at least every two years, to assess implementation and effectiveness.

This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.