

The Acorn School

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Written:

Reviewed and Approved by Proprietors: September 2018

Graeme Whiting _____ *Sarah Whiting* _____

Approved by Headteachers: September 2018

James Whiting _____ *Barney Franklin* _____

Next review date: September 2019

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Acorn School recognises its responsibility to staff and pupils in respect of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 (as amended by the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001).

DEFINITION

The Disability Discrimination Act describes a disabled person as someone with ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

Examples include diabetes, multiple sclerosis, cancer and heart conditions; hearing or sight impairments, or a significant mobility difficulty; and mental health conditions or learning difficulties. Only the courts have the power to determine if an individual is included under the DDA; case law has shown disability to also include asthma, ME, cerebral palsy, back injury and depression, amongst others.

Discrimination occurs when, for a reason relating to the disability, a disabled person is treated less favourably than a person to whom that reason does not apply, without justification.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As an independent school, the proprietors, Graeme and Sarah Whiting, are responsible for ensuring that the school complies with the DDA.

The responsibility of the school is to not discriminate in admission, education and associated services and/or exclusions, and as an employer, where reasonable. Whether particular steps are reasonable is contingent on cost, effectiveness, size and resources available to the employer, extent of disruption and availability of financial or other assistance.

An example of measures the school has in place, to help make it accessible, include those for staff and pupils with dyslexia. Upper school students are supported in using laptops to do their work, and all staff and policy documents are produced in a non-serif font, at least 12pt, printed on off-white paper. For other forms of disability we have other, relevant, measures in place.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO EMPLOYEES

The school will not discriminate towards current or prospective employees.

During the application process for a job with The Acorn School, the headmasters, James Whiting and Barney Franklin, will ascertain whether the candidate has any disabilities. In the case that there is a disability, as part of assessing the application, the headmaster will then determine whether any changes would be necessary in employing that person and, if so, whether those changes are reasonable and possible.

If changes are reasonable and possible, or if no changes are necessary, then the application will proceed as usual (see Child Protection and Safer Recruitment document for details of the school recruitment process).

RESPONSIBILITIES TO PUPILS

The school will not discriminate against current or prospective pupils.

During the application process for a place at The Acorn School, the headmasters, James Whiting and Barney Franklin, will ascertain whether the potential pupil has any disabilities. In the case that there is a disability, as part of assessing the application, the headmaster will then determine whether any changes would be

necessary to enable the pupil to be part of the school and, if so, whether these changes are reasonable and possible. If changes are reasonable and possible, or if no changes are necessary, then the application will proceed as usual.

As a small independent school we are currently unable to provide adequate support for pupils with severe Special Education Needs (SEN).

Pupils with mild SEN, which we are able to manage, are supported through a close relationship between teachers and parents. Any concerns the pupil, parents or teachers may have over how a specific child's SEN are being handled, should be raised with the class teacher in the first instance, followed by the headmaster if the matter is not resolved.

The school only has the resources to support a limited number of children with SEN, so each application will be dealt with on an individual basis, as outlined above.

In the case of other disabilities, the school is committed to providing education to as wide a range of children as possible. When considering whether any changes necessary in accepting a child with a disability are reasonable and possible, the school will look closely at each and every application. Any measures we would be able to put in place to enable such a child to join the school would be welcome, if practical and financially viable. So, for example, if a student's disability required the use of a wheelchair, we would make sure that any lesson in one of our two upstairs classrooms, would be moved, for the whole class, to an accessible, ground floor, classroom. If appropriate, as a small fee-paying school, we may seek extra funding from the child's parents or relevant external organisation, and, when such funding became available, we would put in an appropriate wheelchair platform or stair lift for the relevant staircase and classroom, subject to planning permission.