

# Disability Policy

Reviewed: DL July 2018

Next review date July 2019



## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Godolphin and Latymer School aims to treat everyone in its community with dignity and respect and to provide an environment for learning and working that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.

## 2 Definition of Disability

- 1.2 Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

- 1.3 The following are generally covered under this definition:

- Physical and sensory impairments
- Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD)
- Communication and social difficulties (e.g. autistic spectrum)
- Mental health issues
- Severe disfigurements
- Anyone with an HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis
- Progressive conditions that affect normal day-to-day activities, including long term physical health issues

## 2 Discrimination

- 2.1 The School will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining pupil admissions or employment procedures;
- in the provision of education and associated services;
- in the way the School affords access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the School; or
- by excluding a person on the grounds of his or her disability.

- 2.1 Unlawful behaviour and discrimination against disabled individuals can take place in the following ways:

- **Direct Discrimination:** an individual is treated less favourably than another because of a disability;
- **Indirect Discrimination:** where a rule or policy applies to the majority but disadvantages someone with a disability;
- **Discrimination by Association:** direct discrimination against an individual because they associate with another person who has a disability;
- **Discrimination by Perception:** direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a disability;

- **Discrimination arising from a disability:** discrimination against an individual because of something that is a consequence of their disability;
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct, related to a disability, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person;
- **Harassment by a Third Party:** Godolphin and Latymer is potentially liable for harassment of individuals by third parties; and/or
- **Victimisation:** when an individual is treated badly because they have made, or supported, a complaint or grievance under the Equality Act.

### 3 Disclosure and Confidentiality

3.1 It is understood that individuals are often reluctant to disclose details about their disability. However, disclosure can be beneficial for the following reasons:

- The stress of not divulging a disability can exacerbate the individual's difficulties at work or study;
- The employee and manager, or teacher and pupil, can together determine what adjustments, if any, would maintain or improve working conditions;
- The support of colleagues and friends can be enlisted.

3.2 Parents are asked to inform the School as soon as possible if they are, or become, aware that their daughter has a disability.

3.3 The School has a legal duty to safeguard the confidentiality of personal and medical information. When an individual's disability status is known, all necessary and potentially damaging disclosure must be avoided. Disclosure will only occur:

- With the explicit consent of the individual;
- On a "need-to-know" basis where necessary to safeguard or promote a pupil's welfare;
- When it helps to facilitate the individual's ability to do their job; or
- If it is absolutely necessary within the law.

3.3 The Equality Act makes it unlawful for the School to ask job applicants about their health before offering them a position. Medical questionnaires issued on appointment are sent directly to the School Doctor in confidence.

### 4 Reasonable Adjustments

4.1 The School has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled individuals.

4.2 For pupils and prospective pupils, the duty to make reasonable adjustments can be summarised as follows:

- Where something the School does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the School must take reasonable steps to try to avoid that disadvantage; and

- The School is expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.

4.3 For employees and applicants for positions at the School, the School has a duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' where a disabled person would otherwise be put at a substantial disadvantage compared with their colleagues or fellow applicants.

## **5 Physical Environment**

4.1 Although the duty to make reasonable adjustments does not extend to the physical environment, the School is eager that disabled people should have easy, dignified access to the school buildings and facilities whenever this can be reasonably done and proposes to adopt accessibility plans which are consistent with the special architectural and historic character of the buildings.

4.2 Parents and prospective parents of disabled children may wish to obtain copies of the School's Accessibility Plan which is available on request. This shows the way in which we plan to make our buildings progressively more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors.

4.3 The School has a medical room which is open during the school day and is staffed by the School Nurse throughout the day. The School Doctor holds surgeries once a week.

## **5 Staff Awareness**

5.1 All colleagues have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that non-discriminatory policies and procedures are in place in order to avoid discrimination against disabled staff, girls and visitors. In addition, all colleagues have a responsibility to challenge the victimisation or harassment of disabled individuals.

5.2 Teaching staff receive whole-staff training on the learning needs of pupils with disabilities. Individual training is offered if appropriate.

5.3 The School and colleagues involved in dealing with personnel issues have a particular responsibility to avoid discrimination in the areas of:

- Recruitment
- Training and development
- Career development
- Redundancy and dismissal
- Day to day working life

Should the need arise the Personnel Manager is available to provide advice to staff.

## **6 Pupil Admissions**

6.1 The School is a non-denominational day school for girls and welcomes staff and pupils from many different ethnic groups, backgrounds and creeds. Human rights and freedoms are respected. At present, our physical facilities for the disabled are limited but we will do all that is reasonable to ensure that the School's culture, policies and procedures are made accessible to children who have disabilities and to comply with our legal and

moral responsibilities under equality legislation in order to accommodate the needs of applicants and pupils who have disabilities for which, after reasonable adjustments, we can cater adequately.

- 6.2 Admission to the School is by competitive entry based on information received from tests in Mathematics and English, two General interviews and a school reference. The School must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every opportunity that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult.
- 6.3 The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of her disability.
- 6.4 The School asks parents to provide details of disabilities and relies on the information provided. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take advice and request any assessments it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.
- 6.5 We will discuss thoroughly with parents and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for their daughter once they have accepted the offer of a place and before their daughter becomes a pupil at the School. We recognise that some pupils may also require support from our Individual Learning specialist and we would normally discuss this issue with parents before their daughter enters the School.

## **7 Policy**

- 7.1 This Disability Policy will be reviewed regularly by the School and it may take advice from experts in any relevant field. In September 2015, an Accessibility Working Group was formed to meet as and when required with the following terms of reference:
- review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect parents, visitor, pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
  - aim to make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;
  - prepare an Accessibility Plan setting out how we plan to make our curriculum, buildings and the information we provide more accessible to disabled pupils, parents and visitors; and
  - review such plans and policies as necessary.