

## DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

### About the school – ethos, admissions, values, access

At Richmond House School we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services to the school.

The School aims to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and participate as fully as possible in school life. On approaching the school, Richmond House would hope any prospective parent/guardian would be open to enable free discussion in order that the school can reasonably evaluate what adjustments RHS may need to make and take such advice as it deems appropriate.

Our admission policy is non selective on entry, but the school must feel sure that it would be able to develop the potential of any prospective pupil. It must feel that a prospective pupil will have a happy and successful school career and emerge confident and well educated, as a minimum, broadly in line with the standard achieved by his/her peers.

The achievement of disabled pupils is monitored (See SENCO and Inclusion policy) and the school will make reasonable adjustments so as not to disadvantage a pupil because of his/her disability.

Richmond House School location and site is problematic being a Victorian building. The building is approached via slopes, steps and the classrooms are located on many floors, with no lifts installed. Some teaching is classroom based and some in specifically equipped rooms in outlying buildings/classrooms. This does require the pupils to move through the building on a regular basis. Some pupils with certain disabilities may be at a disadvantage but it is cost, space and site prohibitive to make some adjustments, e.g. lifts.

The governors will review this policy on a regular basis in line with the disability action plan in order to make the school as accessible as practicable.

### Definition of a Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

This ability to carry out normal day to day activities relates to one or more of the following areas:

Mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, continence, ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, speech, hearing or eyesight, memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand and perception of the risk of physical danger.

The DDA has extended the definition of disability to include people with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer from the point of diagnosis. Individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is 'clinically well-recognised'; although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse affect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

In accordance with Disability Equality in Education (DEE) Richmond House School recognises all pupils with special educational needs, including those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). We also recognise those with long-term medical needs as being treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to pupils with long term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day to day activities.

Consideration will be given to specific individual cases and provision may fall under other policy areas. Reference may need to be made to Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2015) and Counselling in Schools: a blueprint for the future (March 2015).

The following outlines areas considered, reviewed and actions taken.

**Admissions:** Review admissions policy to ensure full information is obtained to assess the prospective pupil and consider any reasonable adjustments which could be made.

**Physical layout:** Sensible adjustments within the confines of the building will be made, eg hand rails, lowering of light switches, ramps, toilet facilities in pavilion etc. However, the age and configuration of the building will make this problematic. The school will take account of the needs of the pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises, such as improved access, lighting, acoustic treatment and colour scheme and more accessible facilities and fittings.

**Curriculum/education:** Gym, pavilion and sporting facilities (including toilets) are accessible for wheelchairs. Other adjustments have been and continue to be made regarding class locations to ensure children and staff, if required, are on ground floors and/or close to appropriate toilet facilities. This does impact on the other year groups – mainly an issue in upper school.

The SEN policy covers children's needs. A child's IEP is reviewed termly by the class teacher and SENCO with a full review on an annual basis by the SENCO in line with the recommendations in the Code of Practice and any relevant local bodies and parents.

**Information provision:** All steps will taken appropriate to the needs of the pupils, staff or others providing services to provide information in the best format. Where available and within budgetary constraints or chargeable, external services could be engaged to assist in providing information in different formats.

**Welfare:** The school does not tolerate discrimination or bullying. See pastoral and anti-bullying policies. Staff training is provided, where required, specific to pupils with special needs or disabilities, e.g. lifting.

## **Disability Access**

1. H&S committee review current plan and audit current arrangements
2. Prepare list of adaptations if appropriate– short, medium, long term
3. Implement adaptations as far as possible
4. Monitor and review in light of resources available

## **Accessibility Plan**

### Overview

The objective of the plan is to ensure the school complies with current legislation and works towards an efficient, cost effective and practical way of improving facilities, services and opportunities for the inclusion of disabled people.

This should cover

accessibility – entry, exit and moving around the building  
inclusion – activities carried out, assistance and support, treatment by others  
communication – knowledge of what is available

In all cases reasonableness will be applied to ensure standards are maintained, practical and intelligent cost appraisals are done and the interests of the pupils are promoted.

### Actions planned for 2015 - 2018

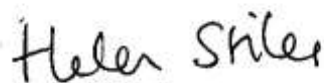
See separate schedule

### Governing body review

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body at the first meeting of each year. Any deficiencies will be remedied without delay and alterations will be made immediately or as soon as possible to policy and procedure, if required.

Policy Date: January 2017

Signed Headteacher



Signed (Chair of Governors)

