



DISABILITY POLICY

Disability is defined by the Disability Act 1995 (DDA) ' 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/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.'

St. Aldhelm's Academy recognises its duty under the DDA:

- Not to discriminate against disabled young people in their admissions and exclusions, and provision of education and associated services.
- Not to treat disabled young people less favourably.
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled young people at a substantial disadvantage.
- To publish an Accessibility Plan.
- To ensure governors and staff have regard to the DRC Code of Practice (2002) when performing their duties.
- To value parents' knowledge of the young person's disability and its effect on his/her ability to carry out normal activities.
- To respect the parent's and young person's right to confidentiality.
- To provide all young people with a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated and adjusted to meet the needs of the individual young people and their preferred learning styles and to endorse the key principles in the National Curriculum framework, which underpin the development of a more inclusive curriculum. In so doing, setting learning challenges by:
 - Responding to the young people's diverse learning needs.
 - Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of young people.
 - To treat all staff fairly and appropriately if they are, or become, disabled.

St. Aldhelm's Academy will:

- Fulfil its legal obligations under the DDA (1995) and any related subsequent legislation.
- Seek to identify and remove all unjustified direct and indirect discrimination against people with a disability/learning difficulty.
- Pursue a consistent programme of development and improvement in facilities, in processes and in the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff to meet the needs of people with disability/ learning difficulty.
- Liaise with national organisations and local support services to ensure that a range of options, resources and facilities are identified for the benefit of individuals.
- Admissions from potential young people or applications for employment are assessed on the basis of the applicant's aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Disabled staff and young people have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Academy.

- The views of the individual young person or member of staff are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- Members of staff working with disabled people either as colleagues or young people, have appropriate information and support.
- The Academy will take steps to enable staff and young people who become disabled during their time at the Academy to continue in their chosen career, wherever possible.
- The academy will endeavour to accommodate disabled visitors, wherever possible, to enable them to participate in events held on the Academy premises.
- As far as is reasonably practicable and within the constraints of existing buildings, , the Academy locations are accessible and safe for disabled young people.

DIABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE – CODE OF PRACTICE RELATING TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Admissions

- All parents of young people who are being called for a discussion at the Academy should be asked if they require any assistance to enable them or their child to access the buildings and/or to participate fully in the discussions, for instance the provision of information in an alternative format.
- The Academy will make available clear information about access to buildings and support facilities to enable the parents of disabled young people to make an informed choice.
- The Academy will identify a designated member of staff with whom the parents of disabled young people may discuss the curriculum, the learning and teaching activities entailed, to ensure that any learning support and other needs are clearly identified. Designated members of staff will receive appropriate training.
- No young person will be refused a place at the Academy on the grounds of disability alone before an opportunity has been provided for a full consideration of the specific support or facilities required, in consultation with the Principal, the SENCO and others whose expertise may be required for the specific situation.

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

- The Academy will take appropriate steps to ensure that lessons are organised in ways which offer the best possible opportunities for full participation by disabled young people.
- The Academy will identify designated members of staff with whom disabled young people and their parents may discuss the specific requirements of their intended curriculum, in advance, to ensure that learning support and other needs are identified and made known to relevant staff. This mechanism will also be used to enable young people and their parents to discuss any emerging needs and identify appropriate possible courses of action to address those needs. Designated members of staff will receive appropriate training.
- Appropriate modes of examination and assessment will be determined after consultation with the young person and their parents, relevant academic staff, the SENCO and others, as necessary, to enable the young people to demonstrate that they have met the criteria for progression or the conferment of an award. The

purpose of any special arrangements shall be to compensate for any restriction imposed by the disability without compromising academic standards.

- Any request for special arrangements, in relation to examination and assessment procedures, must be supported by medical or other evidence and it is the young person's and their parents' responsibility to make that available to the Academy.
- The Academy will take all appropriate steps to ensure that a young person who becomes disabled during their time at the Academy has every opportunity to remain at the Academy through the provision of the same adaptation and support as a comparable young person who is disabled at the start of their Academy career.
- The Academy will aim to ensure that disabled young people have equal access to all facilities. While it is recognised that some of these facilities are located in buildings, which have access problems, the Academy will ensure that the facility can be provided in such a way that the needs of the disabled young person are met.
- The Academy will take account of the needs of the young people 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.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The Academy will ensure that all young people, including young people with special educational needs and disabilities, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other health and safety issues within the Academy.

DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE ON EMPLOYMENT

- The DDA makes it unlawful for the Academy, and therefore, any of its employees to discriminate in the field of employment, against a disabled person for a reason that relates to the person's disability, if that treatment cannot be justified. This applies not only to requirements, but to all areas of employment including the terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies. This Code of Practice aims to ensure that the Academy acts within the law.

Wherever practicable, the Academy will:

- Seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Seek to ensure that disabled employees are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed term contracts are being considered.

RECRUITMENT

- Application and selection procedures used in the recruitment and selection of staff should encourage disabled people. All applicants should be asked when being called

for interview if they require any assistance to enable them to participate fully in the interview.

- All candidates will be assessed on their abilities, qualifications and experience according to the objective criteria developed for the post. It may be that a 'reasonable adjustment' would be required to allow a disabled candidate to meet the criteria but it should be assumed, in deciding whether the individual meets the criteria, that the appropriate adjustment has been made.

SUPPORT IN EMPLOYMENT

- Some disabled people may require additional support when settling into their working environment. Senior members of staff should ensure that particular needs are discussed with the individual concerned. In particular, consideration should be given to any adaptation which may be necessary to enable the individual to work on equal terms with non disabled colleagues. Any necessary modifications should ideally be agreed and carried out before the individual commences work. Consideration should also be given to parking facilities, toilet facilities and health and safety issues such as fire alarms and procedures.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where the disability is not obvious, the individual should be asked if they wish their colleagues to be informed of their disability and their wishes should be respected. In certain cases, it may be appropriate for some colleagues to be aware of the condition in order to be able to respond appropriately in cases of emergency.

TRAINING

Training should be made available to disabled people on the same basis as their colleagues. Where special arrangements are required, this should be put into place.

MEMBERS OF STAFF WHO BECOME DISABLED

Losing the services of a member of staff who becomes disabled can deprive the Academy of a considerable asset in terms of the skills and experience of the individual as well as an investment in that individual's training and development. Where practicable the Academy will attempt to retain staff who become disabled and to ensure suitable employment for them. Senior members of staff should deal as sensitively as possible with these situations and seek help where required. Help should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status, financial loss and loss of self esteem.

The Academy is required by law to make reasonable adjustments to enable the individual to continue in post.

There are a number of possible options to consider:

- Continuing in the same post – the Academy should be sensitive and flexible in assisting staff to return to work. Where it is thought some difficulties could be

encountered the Academy should consider a gradual return to work or a permanent reduction in hours until confidence and ability are restored. A trial period of 12 weeks can be used to try and assess whether the member of staff can cope with the old or new job.

- Re-deployment – where it is not practicable for the individual to continue in their former post, the Academy should attempt to redeploy the individual into a suitable alternative post.
- If a suitable vacancy cannot be found in the Academy, there may be a suitable vacancy in another school. The academy will do everything possible to support the individual.

In both options outlined above, individuals have recourse to the Grievance Procedure if they are not satisfied that they have been treated fairly.

- Premature retirement on grounds of incapacity, as per the normal procedures.
- Termination of employment. If all other options have been explored and found to be impracticable, dismissal on the grounds of incapacity should be considered.

VISITORS

The Academy will aim to ensure that all buildings intended for use by disabled people are accessible. Provision of information will also be required for emergency and evacuation procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Academy staff are expected to be aware of this policy and treat disabled people whether young people, staff, visitors, members of the public in accordance with these provisions. This policy will be reviewed annually.

The Academy will seek and take account of relevant advice, where appropriate, of external services, such as specialist teacher advisors and SEN advisors and of appropriate health professionals.

Further information can be obtained from:

- The 'Code of Practice for Schools' DDA 1995 Part 4
- The Employment Service.
- The Disability Rights Commission (www.drc.org)