

West End Academy



Disability Equality Policy

Reviewed: September 2024

Next review date: September 2025

* In this document:

- the term 'parent' includes guardian and primary carer
- the term 'student' includes pupil
- the term 'Principals' includes and Headteacher Co-Headteacher
- the term 'Vice Principal' includes Deputy Head

Vision and Values

West End Academy is committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for pupils/students with a disability. It also strives to support staff with a disability and all those with a disability receiving services from the academy or who are engaged in some way. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. Our academy believes that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. It is our hope that all our pupils/students becoming adults of the future will have an understanding and empathy in relation to those with a disability and will positively contribute to an inclusive society.

This Disability Equality Policy for supporting learners forms part of the full academy response to the Equality Act 2010.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out details of matters that may be relevant when determining whether a person meets the definition of disability. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Our main aims in relation to supporting those pupils/students with a disability:

- To provide the best possible education for all pupils/students including those with a disability within a supportive and caring community equipping them with the attitude, skills and abilities to cope with a rapidly changing world,
- To ensure that there is no evidence of discrimination in relation to those with a disability,
- To encourage all those connected to pupils/students with a disability to have realistic but high expectations,
- To encourage all pupils/students with a disability to have realistic but high expectations of themselves,

- To ensure that those with a disability feel safe within their learning environment,
- To provide reasonable adjustments to the fabric of the building and academy site wherever necessary to meet the needs of the those with a disability in relation to bespoke individual need or through strategic accessibility planning,
- To review all policies into practice to ensure that they reflect accessibility and reasonable adjustments where relevant,
- To monitor impact of provision for those pupils/students with a disability in relation to agreed measures such as academic progress, attendance and records of bullying incidents,
- To feel confident that our pupils/students have reached their full potential,
- To ensure that up to date national and local legislation or guidance is adhered to and implemented,
- To work alongside parents/carers to allow them to feel equal in meeting their child's needs and to ensure that they feel confident that their child is educated and cared for appropriately,
- To ensure that pupil/student participation is embedded in practice and that reasonable adjustments are made to allow those with a disability to have a voice,
- To engage appropriate specialist services and agencies to ensure that individual needs are being met but also to form part of consultation and involvement on strategic policies being put into practice.

West End Academy pays due regard to statements in the Equality Act such as:

'The responsible body of such a school must not discriminate against a pupil

- *in the way it provides education for the pupil;*
- *in the way it affords the pupil access to a benefit, facility*
- *or service;*
- *by not providing education for the pupil;*
- *by not affording the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service;*
- *by excluding the pupil from the school;*
- *by subjecting the pupil to any other detriment.'*

Equality Act 2010 (c. 15)

Part 6 – Education

Chapter 1 – Schools

'schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities'.

Paragraph 1.25 The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities

Gathering and Using Information

We will gather information on disability equality as part of our collection of evidence for the School Development Plan and during the self-evaluation process. This information will be used to set and review our full SEND action plan and/or accessibility plan.

Involvement and Consultation

West End Academy consults with pupils/students with a disability, staff and service users in the development of our Disability Equality Policy to support learners and to inform future developments. Examples of involvement and consultation are:

- Questionnaires
- Drop-in sessions
- School Council meetings
- Informal meetings
- Statutory annual review meetings
- Assess, Plan, Do, Review meetings
- Open evenings
- Formal 1:1 meetings with students
- Governors meetings
- Multi-agency meetings
- Feedback on observations
- Appraisal meetings with staff

Employment and Commitment to Staff Development

As an employer we will ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote disability equality within our workforce. We will ensure equality of opportunity throughout all our employment practices, including, recruitment, retention and training.

The Equality Act 2010 helps us to understand how to fulfil our duties.

West End Academy will, taking medical or specialist advice where appropriate and ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to allow new and existing staff with disabilities to work effectively within the school.

Accessibility Planning

The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities states that:

‘Schools and LAs need to carry out accessibility planning for students with a disability. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

Schools must implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- *increasing the extent to which students with a disability can participate in the curriculum;*
- *improving the physical environment of schools to enable students with a disability to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided; and*
- *improving the availability of accessible information to students with a disability.*

‘Schools need to have regard for the providing of adequate resources for implementing plans and must regularly review them. An accessibility plan may be a freestanding document but may also be published as part of another document such as the school development plan.’

Our latest Accessibility Plan is available on the school website or on request.

Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 and Schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities also states that:

‘The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to people with a disability. For schools the duty is summarised as follows:

Where something a school does places a student with a disability at a disadvantage compared to other students then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.

Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a student with a disability when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the student faces in comparison to non-disabled students.’

West End Academy will develop reasonable adjustments as part of the whole school accessibility plan as well as providing bespoke provision for individual students.

Relevant policies will reflect how reasonable adjustment will be made for those pupils/students with a disability, for example, the behaviour policy.

Making Things Happen

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the statutory requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010, West End Academy will have in place a full SEND action plan to enable this.

This includes some of the good practice examples below:

- Promote equality of opportunity between people with disability and other people,
- Increase awareness of the ways in which parents of children with a disability and young people can help to support their learning, for example through full staff training, engaging specialists where appropriate and by providing parental workshops,
- Ensure that the talents of students with a disability are represented accordingly,
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010,
- Monitor incidents of harassment and bullying of students with a disability in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy,
- Promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability,
- Ensure that the school curriculum and policies allow access for all,
- Use the school environment to promote positive attitudes to disability,
- Ensure that disability is represented in posters, collages, displays and learning materials,
- Make small step developments to the physical environment,
- Employ support staff to meet individual need,
- Ensure that there is good involvement of a school governor,
- Complete health care plans or personal support plans where necessary,

The latest SEND Action Plan is available on request.

The Local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that policy is put into practice and this will be reviewed at least annually. They will also support all staff involved by agreeing to them accessing training and by ensuring that they feel secure and comfortable that they are adhering to national and local guidance.

The Local Governing Body with the Headteacher will ensure that there are appropriate levels of insurance in place.

The Local Governing Body with the Headteacher will address the complaints procedure at least annually.

The Headteacher with support from the Senior Leadership Team and the Special Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) are responsible for ensuring that the day to day implementation of the policy is carried out in a smooth way and is embedded in practice.

Members of non-teaching staff will support individual pupils/students wherever necessary throughout the school day.

Other identified staff will be responsible for implementing the Equality Act for other protected characteristics such as race.

Appropriate links to Government documentation are:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/schedule/10>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/3221/made>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/2260/contents/made>

The SENCO is: Samantha Jackson (Emily Nelson will cover whilst on maternity leave)

The named Governor is: Victoria Hughes

The Headteacher is: Chris Johnson