

SENDA

St Edmund's School Canterbury

Policy regarding access to pupils with disabilities incorporating a three-year accessibility plan commencing April 2009

St Edmund's School was founded in 1749 as the Clergy Orphan School. From its foundation therefore its mission has been to care for the disadvantaged, a mission that it pursues today, not only for the orphan children of clergy but more generally.

St Edmunds has a proud history of providing support and help for the individual and particularly for the vulnerable individual, responding as necessary to individual difficulties and problems. In recent times pupils suffering from conditions such as Asperger's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, temporary physical incapacity post surgery, as well as more common difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia have thrived at St Edmund's in response to the particular care and support that they have been offered.

1. Standards for Admission and Remaining at St Edmund's

Admission to St Edmund's depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to ensure that he/she:

- Will benefit from and be challenged by the educational programme we offer.
- Will find the educational programme accessible.
- Will feel comfortable with the range and depth of that programme and the pace at which it is delivered.
- Will feel comfortable in the intellectual context of the other pupils in that year group.

Furthermore admission depends on a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible to improve, the educational and general standards for all our pupils, commensurate with the ethos to which the School aspires. We must also feel reasonably sure that we will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at St Edmund's

Our policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which we are aware, subject to our 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 a disability.

We ask parents to indicate on their registration form the nature of any additional educational or other needs. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil we may take such advice and require such assessments as we regard as appropriate. Subject to this, we will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

One of the obvious problems which St Edmund's has (in common with many other schools) is our lay-out, which covers a wide area and consists of many separate and some historic and even listed buildings of several stories and without lifts, which have grown up since the School was founded. Another is the system, again common to many schools, of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid grounds of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires pupils to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. The boarding facilities pose similar problems in greater degrees.

It is not hard to conclude that any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational and other facilities St Edmund's offers. Nor can these matters be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the School at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

Cognizance must always be taken of the financial constraints within which we operate which precludes us from taking the necessary steps immediately to overcome the physical constraints highlighted.

The School has set up a Disability Policy Review Committee which consists of the Senior Management Team in co-ordination with the Governors' Education & Staffing Committee in respect of non-discrimination issues and the Governors' Development & Estates Committee in respect of planning duties, and which may co-opt additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance. The Committee's terms of reference are:

- (i) To review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
- (ii) To make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of our education in its many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by continuing to review these;
- (iii) To continue to review the School's Disability Policy;
- (iv) To continue to review the School's Accessibility Plan.

The following areas have been considered in detail by the Committee with the results set out below:

2. Admissions

The Committee has reviewed the School's admissions literature, policy, examinations and procedures (including access to scholarships and bursaries). Sensible adjustments for admissions exams such as the use of a laptop, question papers in large type, can be agreed in consultation with the Headmaster/Master prior to a prospective pupil sitting the exam.

3. Physical lay-out of St Edmund's and its boarding facilities

Premises

The school recognises that through the provisions of SENDA it is not required to provide 'auxiliary aids' (i.e. special equipment or additional personal support), nor make 'physical alterations to the buildings, (such as provide lifts).

However, to meet its obligations the school will ensure that the needs of disabled staff and pupils are fully considered in any strategic planning for the development of the school site.

The Committee has considered these areas and identified the following problems:

Location	Problem	Adjustments Rejected	Adjustments Planned	Long Term Plan
Boarding Areas				
New Wing Girls	Location on Second Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		
Owen Girls	Location on Second Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		
Lawrence Durrell	Location on Second Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		Installation of lift in the main school building to service first and second floors.
East Dorm	Location on Second Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		Installation of lift in the main school building to service first and second floors.
		Bathrooms located at a different level.		
West Dorm	Location on Second Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		Installation of lift in the main school building to service first and second floors.
		Bathrooms located at a different level.		

Location	Problem	Adjustments Rejected	Adjustments Planned	Long Term Plan
Stuart Townend	Located on Third Floor	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		
	Insufficient bathrooms on the same level.			
Junior Boarding	Located on Second and Third Floors	Installation of lift which would involve excessive cost implications.		Installation of lift as above (shared lift JS/SS)
Teaching Space – Junior School				
Upper Floor of Classroom Block	No lift access	Reduction in size of the Staff Common Room to create a corridor whereby access could be achieved from the main School building where a lift is installed	The agreed use of the Staff Common Room as a means of access from the lift to the second floor. (This adjustment is already practised.)	
Abingdon House	All entrances have a step.			Ramp to be created at main door which will provide access to all of the ground floor. Summer 2010

Location	Problem	Adjustments Rejected	Adjustments Planned	Long Term Plan
Abingdon House	Only access to Second Floor is via stairs.	Installation of lift, the space required would reduce the teaching space available and be prohibitively expensive for the size of the building and its occupancy.		New build on a single floor.
Stable Block	All entrances have a step.			Create ramp at ground floor entrance- done.
	Only access to Second Floor is via stairs.	Installation of lift, the space required would reduce the teaching space available and be prohibitively expensive for the size of the building and its occupancy.		
Departmental Teaching Space – JS/SS				
Food Technology	Steps to the entrance.			Create a ramp on one of the entrances M'Mas 2010
Art & Design Technology	Steps to the entrance.			Create a ramp at the main entrance. Easter 2010
	Second floor in relation to Art.	Installation of lift, the space required would reduce the teaching space available and be prohibitively expensive for the size of the building and its occupancy.		

Location	Problem	Adjustments Rejected	Adjustments Planned	Long Term Plan
Science	Steps at entrance.			Create a ramp at the main entrance.
	Second Floor	Installation of lift, the space required would reduce the teaching space available and be prohibitively expensive for the size of the building and its occupancy.		
Music	Steps at entrance.	Create a ramp at the main entrance.		
Languages and Geography Mobiles	Steps at entrance.			Ramp on each of the three buildings.
History	Steps at entrance.			Creation of a ramp.
Senior Classroom Block	Steps at front entrance.	Creation of a ramp at the main entrance.		
	Steps at rear entrance.		Installation of a ramp. Summer 2011	
	Only access to second floor via stairs	Lift inside to access both floors which is deemed to be prohibitively expensive at this point of time.		

Location	Problem	Adjustments Rejected	Adjustments Planned	Long Term Plan
Other Areas				
Main Building	All entrances currently have steps.		Access via door opposite Catering Office which will allow access to the entire ground floor of the building Easter 2010	
Second Floor House Rooms		The inclusion of a lift to service all floors within the main building will involve excessive cost implications.		Inclusion of lift in the main School building.
Sporting Facilities				
Cricket Pavilion	Steps at entrance.			To create a ramp. Easter 2010
Old Gym	Steps at entrance.			To create a ramp. Lent 2010 as part of second entrance
Swimming Pool Enclosure	Steps down			To create a ramp. Easter 2012
Swimming Pool	Entry to water	Assisted disabled entrance considered but it too expensive.		Covered swimming pool would have necessary adjustments made to allow accessibility.
Welfare				
Medical Centre	Located on Third Floor	The installation of a lift which is too expensive		Relocate on Ground Floor, or installation of lift as above.

4. Education

Staff:

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a regular basis.

Where necessary, support staff time will be allocated, relevant to the disabled member of staff's needs.

Wherever possible the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff.

Within the constraints of financial resources the school aims to make adjustments to the premises to enable the member of staff to teach effectively.

Pupils:

In teaching and learning activities a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no pupils is excluded from learning.

The Committee has considered:

- The problems of physical access caused by the fixed classroom system.
- The difficulties of "access" to the education generally for specified types of disability: e.g. sight or hearing-impaired, dyslexia, dyspraxia, etc.

Adjustments considered and accepted are as follows:

- Appropriate seating for the sight or hearing impaired.
- Enlarged notes, etc. for the sight impaired.
- The appropriate provision of specialist curriculum support teaching.
- Appropriate staff training.
- Special risk assessment for trips and activities.
- A special needs list (already in place) identifying pupils with particular needs, which is regularly updated and on which staff are regularly briefed.
- Adjustments as practicable or necessary in practical subjects such as assistance from a peer or member of staff as available, observation rather than participation in the interests of safety, etc.

Within the next three years, additional AEN support needs to be considered in the Senior School to respond to the increased demands of pupils with AEN and associated administrative tasks. Ideally, this will involve providing more clerical support to the SENCO as well as the possibility of providing additional teaching capacity.

5. Recreational Activities

The Committee has considered:

- The difficulties of "access" to the particular activities for specified types of disability.
- The particular disabilities of pupils at the School in recent years and the provision made for them.

The Committee, in discussion with parents and the pupil involved, will continue to ensure that all adjustments possible in line with common sense and practical application will be made for any particular disability as they always have been to date.

6. Sporting Education and Activities

As for recreational activities above.

7. Welfare

The Committee has considered:

- The difficulties which might arise for specified types of disability.

The Committee considers that the School's responses to all such difficulties, e.g. bullying, non-integration, physical and mental upset, health problems, etc. are documented in the staff handbook, the parents' handbook and the new pupils' handbook and apply equally to those with disabilities as to those without. There is a clear complaints procedure for pupils, mentors are organised as appropriate and school prefects understand that one of their roles is ensure the welfare of all.

A comprehensive pastoral system incorporating teachers, form teachers/tutors, housemasters, chaplain, school counsellor is already in place. Over the next three years, the use of Welfare Plans will be reviewed by the Pastoral Committee, led by the Chaplain.

Additionally, it would be desirable to give the Chaplain a lighter timetable to give him/her time to devote to ministering to the welfare needs of the whole community. Any such change needs to be implemented within the three year framework of this document and reviewed before April 2012.

8. Harassment

The School values each member of staff for their contribution to the school and will seek to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable no member of staff is disadvantaged by reason of his/her disability.

The Governing Body will take positive action against any employee's harassment of another employee. All employees have a duty not to harass other employees on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognised by the law), and to report instances of harassment to the Headmaster (or in the case of harassment by the Headmaster, to the Chair of the Governing Body).

9. Awareness and observance of the policy

The Committee has considered the existing machinery in the School for ensuring awareness and observance of the policy:

- Comprehensive guidance in the staff handbooks.
- Comprehensive and widely published school rules.
- Guidance in PHSE lessons, in chapel and in religious studies lessons.
- Meetings of Headmaster, Master and Head of Finance & Estates.
- Meetings of Senior Management Teams in both Junior and Senior Schools.

- Meetings organised as necessary which might include Headmaster/Master, Housemaster/Form Master/Tutor, curriculum support teacher, a member of the medical staff, the chaplain, the parents.
- In-service training.
- Frequent communication between teachers and the curriculum support departments.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and improved and developed as appropriate within the governors policy review schedule.

MTS

Policy formally adopted by Governing Body on

Signed
Chairman of Governors

Date of next review: