

# Beech Lodge

## EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND EQUALITIES POLICY AND PLAN**

*Beech Lodge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.*

## **References: SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA), The Equality Act 2010**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **School Accessibility Plan**

The plan is drawn up in accordance with the planning duty in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). It also draws on guidance set out in the DfED document 'Accessible Schools' issued in 2002

#### **Definition of Disability**

Disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) as '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 or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities

#### **Philosophy**

At Beech Lodge School we believe that the quality education for all children can be defined through developing a culture of inclusion and acceptance, in which all members of the school community are valued equally, treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities. This can be achieved by encouraging the development of inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and supporting the development of inclusive values practices. Pupils, Parents and staff should work together with specialist support agencies and services to remove barriers, which restrict full access to education for all members of the school community. To achieve this, staff, pupils and parents must feel confident that inclusion is beneficial for the development of the child, and equal importance must be given to ensuring that no pupil's education is impaired.

#### **Key Objectives**

To reduce and where possible eliminate barriers to accessing the curriculum and participation in the Beech Lodge School community for pupils and to prospective pupils who have a disability. Our aim is to create an environment whereby, so far as is reasonable and practical, each and every person (whether visiting or attending) can move freely around all the buildings and can experience all we have to offer.

#### **Principles**

Compliance with DDA is consistent with the culture of Beech Lodge School and its Equal Opportunities Policy. In the operation of Beech Lodge School SEND policy we affirm our responsibilities under DDA together with any amendments by SENDA. These can be summarised as

- Not to discriminate against disabled pupils in their admissions and exclusions or the provisions of education and associated activities
- Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably
- To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage
- To publish an Accessibility Plan

In performing their duties and formulating policies staff will give due regard to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) Code of Practice dated 2002. Beech Lodge School fully recognises and values the unique and parental knowledge of their child's disability and the effect of

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that disability on the ability of their child to carry out some activities commonly and readily carried out by other children of the same age. Beech Lodge School also recognises and respects the right to confidentiality for parents and children. The School provides all pupils with a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum, differentiated and adjusted in the accordance with the needs of individual pupils and their own learning styles.

Staff who have designated responsibilities for equality at the school liaise closely with parents, staff and educational psychologists to ensure that the Individual Educational Plans/Provision Maps' for each child with special needs are relevant.

Training is provided to teachers to enable them to teach and support disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs. This training is on-going and will be reviewed and adapted to suit the current needs of pupils.

#### **The key principles are**

- That teaching will set learning challenges that are suitable and demanding
- That teaching will respond to the learning needs of those being taught
- That barriers to learning will be identified and addressed positively and directly. This will involve the active participation of staff, students and also parents where necessary.

#### **Success Criteria**

- To make Staff aware of the implications of catering for pupils with disabilities through CPD and Guest Speakers
- Establishing a culture in the school, where the school as a whole is aware of the range of factors which constitute 'disability'
- Offer a wide range of inset training and CPD opportunities for staff to learn about and implement strategies to ensure full participation of pupils with disabilities
- The needs of pupils with disabilities are taken into account in all planning – whether the lessons or other school activities or for future building plans and renovations
- The spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils with disabilities is not compromised

#### **Evaluation**

- Staff show awareness in schemes of work, half-termly plans and lesson planning
- Improvements are made to the fabric of buildings to cater for pupils and visitors with disabilities as and when circumstances dictate and finances allow
- The school takes measures to ensure that the written materials it produces are accessible in relation to particular individual needs
- So far as is reasonably possible, the curriculum is accessible to pupils with individual needs
- Accessibility Plans are drawn up and implemented for individual pupils with disability, where and when necessary
- Factors affecting pupils with disabilities are seen to be as valuable in discussion as other factors

#### **ADMISSIONS**

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Beech Lodge School must feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop a prospective pupil to the best of his or her ability and potential so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a complete, happy, fulfilling and successful quality of education, and emerge as a confident, well-educated young adult ready to take on their role as global citizens. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the schools.

At Beech Lodge School our policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and prospective pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any pupil or prospective pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

Parents of prospective pupils are asked to provide essential information in respect of their children at the time of application. During the admissions process, the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, Beech Lodge School will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The school is diligent in its efforts to enhance the educational and cultural aspects of a pupil's development during and after their participation in the learning, social and leisure activities of the school. This is regulated through existing policies for Anti-Bullying; Equal Opportunities, Safeguarding and Behaviour Codes of Conduct.

## **ACTIONS**

### **Education and Further Activities**

Beech Lodge School will take all actions necessary to develop and have access to a number of SEND advisers, specialist teaching advisers and health professionals and will seek their advice in supplementing our own specialist staff.

### **School Environment**

In planning and implementing improvements, building developments or site improvements, Beech Lodge School will take account of the needs of pupils, staff and visitors with physical difficulties and sensory impairment.

### **Information Services**

The design and production of literature and information packs Beech Lodge School will ensure that such publications can be produced in an alternative format when requested or required.

An **Action Plan** is appended to the Accessibility Policy and this **Action Plan** will form part of the consideration of the following related policies or plans

- Building and Site Development Plans

- Curriculum Policy

- Equal Opportunities Policy

- School Development Plan

- SEND Policy

- Staff Development plans

## **POINTS TO BE BORNE IN MIND IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENDA**

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- In the forming of plans for Open Days or other admissions related activities they should be held in accessible locations and with the opportunity for prospective disabled students or their parents to disclose in private the nature of the disability and to discuss their support requirements
- A clear arrangement should be known by all staff to ensure that if a disability, specific learning difficulty or significant medical condition is disclosed to them they should contact the appointed SEN coordinator. They would accurately record the information and within the limits of confidentiality would be responsible for ensuring that it is disseminated to those other staff colleagues who may require it
- Staff should be made aware of the resources within the School that are available to them should they feel that a student requires additional assistance
- It is helpful to plan for all teaching material to be prepared in electronic format so that it can be produced in alternative formats.
- The needs of disabled students should be borne in mind in the planning and in curricula and consideration might be given to alternative forms of presentation and assessment.
- Staff development opportunities will be made available to ensure that the teaching practice can meet the learning requirements of individual students.

**Accessibility plan (see Accessibility policy):**

The plan will be reviewed annually, or more frequently where necessary to ensure that the school plans appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to improve access

- To the curriculum
- To the physical environment
- To information normally provided in written form

The school will take into account:

**Physical Environment:**

Steps, stairways, exterior surfaces and paving, building entrances and exits, internal and external doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, lighting, ventilation, lifts, floor-coverings, signs and furniture.

**Physical Aids:**

ICT equipment, enlarged computer screens and keyboards, concept keyboards, switches, specialist desks and chairs and portable aids for pupils with poor hand/eye skills, such as robust scientific glassware and special pens and pencils.

**Information:**

Timetables, textbooks, handouts and information about school events e.g. language, large text, illuminated text, Braille, audiotape, lip speaking and sign language.

**Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored regularly by the Health and Safety Officer and the Proprietor.

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