



# Disability

Policy Document No. 13

Disability Equality Scheme  
Disability Accessibility Plan

**Eastcourt Independent School**  
**August 2016**  
**Last reviewed: August 2016**  
**Next review: August 2017**

## Disability Equality Scheme

### INTRODUCTION

Duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (hereafter PSED) (2011) require Eastcourt to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to.

Two things are paramount:

- as an independent school, our 'permitted form of selection' means that we would be justified in advising parents of disabled children seeking entrance that Eastcourt might not be their best option (Special Educational Needs and Disability Act\* 2001, 28B (6) and 'Interpretation' 9(c))
- nevertheless, at any time pupils or staff may become disabled while at Eastcourt; at the same time provision for disabled parents and other visitors remains a priority.

\*hereafter SENDA

The three elements of the PSED are as follows, and must be seen in the light of the above as variously applicable to pupils, teachers and visitors:

- **Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act**
- **Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it**
- **Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**

– the 'protected characteristic' in the present case being Disability.

## DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The DDA defined 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.’**

Definition of the terms:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments;
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;
- ‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’; and
- ‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments, including hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are all likely to amount to a disability, but only if the effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- 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;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: *i.e.* those with

- cancer
- multiple sclerosis

- HIV infection, or
- a severe disfigurement.

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## ADMISSIONS POLICY AND DISABILITY

Parents of children with disabilities are welcome to make preliminary visits to our school. We will give them the detailed information they require, helping them decide if we can make suitable provision for their child. However, the terms of the SENDA 2001 may be used.

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## CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

### Promoting positive attitudes

Awareness of the disabled is not new to our school. For several years we have developed a successful system to raise the profile of those with disabilities by:

- having regard to the importance of language when referring to disability or disabled people, avoiding terms that stereotype or stigmatise\*
- drawing attention to, and prohibiting, casual informal language which is offensive, intentionally or not
- drawing attention to positive images of disabled people in our library or textbooks
- promoting knowledge about, and encouraging empathy with, disabled people in the context of (among others) PSHCE lessons.

\* such as: victims of, suffering from, afflicted by, crippled by (use 'person who has' or 'person with'); wheelchair-bound, in a wheelchair (use 'uses a wheelchair'); invalid (use 'disabled person'); mentally handicapped, backward, retarded, slow (use 'person with learning difficulties'); deaf and dumb (use 'hearing and speech impaired').

## VISITORS TO SCHOOL

### Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs

Within the limits of resources available, we guarantee reasonable access to the school to parents, carers or visitors with disabilities, and we further monitor the need for such resources, aiming to improve them where necessary and when possible. They have included ramps for wheelchair access to school entrances, and chairs for use while waiting in the office.

We note those parents for whom a disability might warrant alternative forms of communication (such as the telephone for a visually impaired parent).

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## CONTINGENCY PLANS

Promoting equality of opportunity  
Eliminating discrimination  
Eliminating harassment  
Encouraging participation in public life

If at any time a pupil becomes disabled while at Eastcourt, we will put contingency plans into practice. We will hold:

- immediate meetings with the **parents** to determine to what extent the child's future at Eastcourt can reasonably be assured, and for how long.
- immediate meetings for **staff** involved which will highlight these plans and discuss further possibilities.

Such plans will secure the disabled child's

- access to the school and areas within, and
- access to the curriculum

They will take into account the reaction of **fellow pupils**, and positive behaviour will be encouraged, modelled and monitored. Where necessary a 'buddy' system may be introduced.

They will take into account the reaction of **teaching staff**, who will ensure that the disabled pupil is treated no differently – and from time to time more positively – than his/her peers, and that academic expectations remain, within reason, as high as would otherwise have been the case.

**Ancillary staff** will be charged where appropriate with ensuring the disabled pupil's welfare outside the classroom, monitoring the behaviour both of and towards the pupil, reporting where necessary to the class teacher or Mrs Redgrave.

## Disability Accessibility Plan

### FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

We will

- avoid discriminating against disabled applicants for teaching or other posts at Eastcourt
- constantly look for further ways to improve provision and access for people with disabilities
- collect information relevant to those features we have in place, with a view to future action
- ensure as best we can that we are aware of any new disability affecting pupils, parents or staff
- monitor the progress of any disabled children and the provision that we make for them
- attempt to overcome problems by being creative and flexible about use of our present provision as well as looking to further development within the constraints of available resources, particularly the age and layout of the building and expertise of staff.

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### LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE

The London Borough of Redbridge's document *Equalities Scheme* contains (Chapter 3) a "Disability Equality Scheme" relevant to its own operation. It is a general document based on the DDA, and gives no specific guidance to schools.

## ACCESSIBILITY PLANS

updated 08.16

<b>Collecting Information</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Note occurrences of new disability in children, staff or parents	CR and office staff to keep annual log	2015-18
Note the number of job applicants who disclose a disability	ditto	2015-18
Note use-frequency of aids for disabled visitors to school	relevant staff to inform office	2015-18

<b>Positive action</b>		<b>Date</b>
Amend advertisements and editorials to promote disabled applicants	In place	✓ 2008
Seek opinions of newly-disabled children, staff or parents	CR and staff to log these should they occur	2015-18

<b>Accessing Information &amp; Communication</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Printed materials to be offered in easy to read format	All material available in easy to read format	✓ 2008
Ensure contact is available by phone, e-mail or fax	All these means in place	✓ 2008
Staff training to be adjusted to include compliance with the disability policy	Meetings planned	✓ 2011 ongoing

<b>Access to premises</b>		<b>Date</b>
Review, assess and where reasonable make adjustments to steps and lips on doorways	Review completed, moveable ramp installed	✓ 2009
Where appropriate, ensure corridors are sufficiently clear for wheelchair access	All appropriate corridors maintained as clear	Ongoing
Ensure seating is available for disabled visitors	Seating available in addition to wheelchair access	✓ 2008
Review, assess and adjust provision of lighting if necessary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider 'hi-viz' tape at corners, steps, desk edges etc</li> </ul>	'Hi-viz' used where necessary. Emergency lighting installed in No.1 and No.3 corridors.	✓ 2009
Ensure interviews are held in an accessible office/room	Accommodation always available, eg facilities for pregnant visitors are available	✓ 2008
Ensure toilet facilities are available for disabled visitors	Costing and planning regulations investigated, quote sought.	2017