



Regents Park Community College

Accessibility Policy

Policy updated: May 2021

Policy ratified at: May 2021

Policy signed by: Chair of Governors

Policy to be reviewed: May 2024

Statutory

Accessibility Plan

Background

On 1 October 2012, The Equality Act replaced all existing equality legislation such as Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It extends protection from discrimination in some areas and has placed new duties on schools.

The act makes it unlawful for Regents Park Community College and the school's Governing Body, to discriminate against, harass, or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to: -

- Admissions;
- The way we provide education for students;
- The way we provide students access to any benefit, facility or service;
- Exclusions and other sanctions.

Rationale

At Regents Park we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, students and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability. The achievement of all students will be monitored on the basis of disability and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will aim to provide our students with a firm foundation which will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of disability. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against students and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation. At Regents Park we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Regents Park aims to identify and remove barriers to disabled students in every area of school life. Regents Park has high ambitions for its disabled students and expects them to participate in all aspects of school life.

At Regents Park our commitment to equal opportunities is driven by the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement. The school:

- Sets suitable learning challenges
- Responds to students' diverse needs
- Overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students

At Regents Park we will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality. We will do this by:

- Identifying those in need of additional support
- Working with parents, students, staff and external professionals to make reasonable adjustments to ensure needs are met

The Equality Act 2010 states that all schools must carry out accessibility planning for disabled students.

Purpose

- Increasing the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled students, parents and carers
- Improving monitoring, evaluation and review of provision and outcomes

This plan should be read in conjunction with the School Improvement Plan

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 Act 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.

Reasonable Adjustments

We aim to ensure that nothing we do as a school places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other students. However, where we have to do so, we make sure that we take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage. When it is reasonable to do so, we provide auxiliary aids or services for a disabled pupil, when such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces compared to other non-disabled students.

Where an auxiliary aid is not provided under the SEND system (i.e. via a EHC Plan), there should be no assumption that it must be provided as a reasonable adjustment. Any decision would be taken on the basis of the facts of an individual case, including cost implications.

There is no legal definition of auxiliary aids. We interpret this to mean any or all of the following: helpful; providing support or assistance; and that these can be things or persons which help. We include hearing loops, adaptive keyboards and special software.

Our SEND policy defines what provision we make available including reasonable adjustments in our school. We will consider what is reasonable in the context of our school, given the circumstances of each individual case.

Where the auxiliary aid has a benefit to the rest of the child's life outside of school, it would be unreasonable for our school to make such provision, e.g. hearing aids.

We consider that effective and practicable adjustments for disabled students will involve little or no cost or disruption, and will therefore be considered as reasonable. Where substantial adaptations are required which are not contained within our three-year accessibility plan, we reserve the right to deem these as unreasonable.

It is our aim to ensure that disabled students play as full a part as possible in school life and our accessibility plan and reasonable adjustments help support that aim. Where any adjustment would have a detrimental effect on other students, we would not consider it to be reasonable. For example, if a geography field trip were planned to involve climbing and a wheelchair user could not take part, we would carefully consider how the disabled pupil could participate viably, but we would not cancel the Trip because to do so would be detrimental to other students.

Current Provision

Participation in the curriculum

- all disabled students have access to the full curriculum
- teachers plan a wide variety of teaching and learning activities to meet the needs of all students
- disabled students who are statemented or have an Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plan have assigned TAs who support them in lessons according to the provision suggested by the Local Authority. The purpose of this support is to remove practical barriers to participation and to ensure resources are adapted to allow full access
- in the small number of cases where an activity cannot be made accessible for practical or health and safety reasons, an alternative activity is provided
- for students with mental health issues, the SENDco, Assistant SENDco and Head of Year give support to the student, including alternative provision and involvement of external agencies if needed, and offer advice to staff on how to best to meet their needs
- training is provided for staff by the SENDco and external specialists in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.
- the school works closely with parents/carers and professionals in planning for and reviewing provision.

Physical Environment

- for students who require personal care, there are accessible toilet facilities including separate changing facilities in PE & the swimming pool.
- there is a dedicated medical room and staff receive training to be able meet the needs of disabled students.

- an allocated parking space with level access next to the main entrance to the school are provided for parents of disabled students; this area is monitored by reception staff and a parking attendant to prevent inappropriate use;
- the size and layout of all corridors and teaching spaces allow access for all students; all areas are well lit.
- the SENDco arranges for the purchase of specialist resources and equipment where needed, trains staff in its use and monitors its use and effectiveness in lessons

Accessible information

- all teachers are provided with detailed information about the needs of disabled students through provision maps and pupil passports; advice is given on their preferred learning styles and ways to support them in their learning.
- when planning lessons, teachers differentiate resources, using a multi-sensory approach, to ensure they are accessible to all students; this includes simplifying language, use of symbols, large print, providing materials in advance, considering the best page layout, using audio or video files or reading information aloud.
- TAs are provided with lesson information prior to the lesson so that they can assist with the differentiation for the students they support. Exercise books with tinted papers and visual overlays are provided for students with severe dyslexia, Meares Irlen syndrome and epilepsy
- the SENDco and TAs advise department Send Champions and teachers on how to adapt resources and activities to meet the needs of particular students; these are outlined in provision maps and pupil passports which are accessible to all staff on the internet

School performance

Evidence will be gathered and analysed on an annual basis as part of the school cycle of self-evaluation on the following:

- Achievement at the end of each Key stage by students with disabilities
- Recruitment, retention and CPD of disabled staff

Monitoring & Evaluation

- the SENDco monitors the academic progress of students in the SEND code of practice and liaises with subject and support and guidance staff to support those students who are not making expected progress.
- TAs act as key workers for students who have more complex needs and act as advocates where they have concerns about the provision in place to support them.
- provision maps, pupil passports, statements and Education, Health & Care (EHC) plans are reviewed regularly, giving students and parents the opportunity to feedback on their progress and the impact of support.

- the deployment of TAs is monitored during lesson observations and concerns are fed back to the teacher and SENDco.

Current provision

Regents Park Community College responds positively to the duty to promote disability equality. Students with disabilities are welcomed and supported in order for them to fulfil their learning potential.

Involvement of students and staff with disabilities and organisations for the disabled

The school will involve a variety of disabled and non-disabled students, employees and representatives from disability organisations in the local community in its plan.

The following will be used:

- Forums/focus groups of disabled students/parents
- Students/parents as informal accessibility advisors
- Questionnaires
- External organisations/advisors

This information will be combined with data analysis and this will be used to inform planning and improve performance in order to improve outcomes for our disabled community.

The policy is also available in the following formats, on request to the Headteacher: email; enlarged print version; other formats by arrangement.