

Rook's Nest Academy

'Respect, Believe, Achieve'



DISABILITY EQUALITY & ACCESSIBILITY POLICY 2019 – 2020

The Staff and Governors of Rook's Nest Academy aim to make this Academy a place where every member of the Academy community is valued and appreciated. We believe strongly in equal opportunities for all.

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the work place and in the wider society. It sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone. This Act replaces:

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Race Relations Act 1976

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

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 daily activities'. Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect. Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

Rook's Nest Academy also follows the advice of the DfE in their guidance document The Equality Act 2010 and schools. This means that we cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation or any LGBT concern.

This policy sets out the steps the Academy Governing Body will take to achieve the best possible outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life.

Aims

Our Academy ethos of **Respect, Believe, Achieve** is at the heart of this policy

Disability Equality Policy

This Disability Equality Policy is written to ensure that the Academy complies with its general and specific duties under The Equality Act 2010 and DFE Advice for Schools May 2014.

General Duty

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school (The Governing Body), or persons acting on behalf of the Governing Body (employees) to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation:

- Admissions
- The way it provides its education for pupils
- In the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- By excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Act in that it allows schools 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. The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people.

Management of SEND throughout the Academy

At Rook's Nest Academy we have a positive and enthusiastic approach to meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Our qualified Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENCo) Mrs Brooks and Associate SEND Co-ordinator Mrs Corcadden, supported by SEND Governor Mr Overton and outside agencies such as the LA, ensure that all pupils, whatever their specific needs, make the best possible progress in school. We are committed to narrowing the attainment gap between children with SEND and their non-SEND peers. Our aim is to be as inclusive as possible, when meeting the needs of pupils with a Special Educational Need and/or Disability within in our setting.

Alongside the SEND Team we have our Learning Mentor, Mrs Hampshire, who supports pupils with their social and emotional needs. As part of this role she also leads THRIVE. Mrs Hampshire works very closely with parents of pupils who have social, emotional or behavioural concerns. These pupils make very good progress in learning how to manage their own behaviour.

In order to do this many steps are taken to support them through their learning journey. We strive hard to ensure that all pupils:

- have a wide and balanced curriculum which is differentiated to meet their individual needs.
- can learn and make progress according to their individual developmental trends.
- are assessed using appropriate assessment tools and guidelines.
- have equal access to resources, provision and interventions as needed.

As part of the Equality Act 2010 schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary service or aid for a disabled person when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils. Schools should consider whether this is a reasonable adjustment. Many of these auxiliary aids will be provided as part of the pupils SEN provision. All decisions will be based on the facts of each individual case.

All our dedicated staff work hard to achieve this paying due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including; the SEND Code of Practice (January, 2015), the Equality Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014).

Accessibility

The Academy complies with the Equality Act 2010 with regard to implementing and accessibility plan to enable pupils, staff and visitors to access the Academy. These plans are reviewed regularly and include:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improving the physical environment of the academy to enable disabled pupils, staff and visitors to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improving the availability of accessible information to all pupils

A review of accessibility of the premises will be carried out in conjunction with the LA premises team which will inform this plan.

Involving disabled members of our school community (see also Inclusion Policy)

At Rook's Nest Academy we recognise the importance of involving disabled people fully in the development of our Disability Equality Policy. In developing our policy we have involved disabled people in the following ways:

- We ensure that the way our curriculum is taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination.
- Our SEN Provision provides a complete list of those children with known disabilities – this record is linked to the Wakefield Local Offer (a link to this can be found on the Academy website) .
- We identify our Pupil Premium children, monitor their progress and target additional interventions to support their needs
- Our attainment data showing how pupils with different characteristics will be analysed to identify whether any areas of inequality need addressing.
- On-going Pupil Progress Meetings, Targeted SEN support and SEN Support surgeries help to ensure that children to receive specific support to meet their identified needs.
- We are committed to Narrowing the Gap. Children with disabilities are identified in all Teacher's plans and individual needs are addressed.

The views of the children themselves is paramount in a fully inclusive environment. The Learning Mentor takes a lead with her open door policy to all children as well as having more informal discussions with other members of staff. Children themselves will be involved in Annual reviews for their Education Health & Care Plan and Personalised Education Plans where appropriate.

The views of parents are sought formally and informally, through their contribution to, and involvement in Annual reviews, One Page Profile meetings and Parent Progress Meetings.

At Rook's Nest we will do our utmost to make sure that whenever possible all extended school opportunities are open to every child. 'Reasonable adjustments' will be made where necessary to staffing and locations. Participation is actively encouraged and informally monitored. Additional opportunities, such as those provided through the School's Sports Partnership, are promoted to all children and their families. In relation to Residential visits parents will be invited into the Academy to meet with SLT and full risk assessment can be then completed (See Educational Visits Policy).

'Reasonable adjustments' to learning situations will be noted on Individual Profiles to ensure all relevant staff are aware. Educational attainment and progress are carefully monitored to ensure that teaching and learning are inclusive and children are achieving their potential. Teacher's plans, assessment and the Academy tracking system means the progress of individuals is monitored.

Disability Equality Policy

Attendance of these children is monitored by the SENCo and reported back to SLT and Governors termly.

We follow the Wakefield Admissions criteria so our Admissions Policy does not discriminate against disabled pupils.

Our Learning Mentor is at the forefront of inclusion within the Academy. She fosters good relations within our local community in order to promote intergenerational positivity through the 'Generation Exchange' Initiative into the Academy.

We have a committed programme to support children's mental health, which includes designated PHSE lessons, yoga and work on self-image with external organisations such as Barnardos.

The Learning Mentor has an open door policy for both children and parents. All children and parents are invited into the school before their first term through the FEET project (Families Enjoying Education Together).

Social relationships and understanding are actively promoted through the broadly Christian ethos of school assemblies, and positive promotion of disability through role models.

Disabled parents/carers and staff

At Rook's Nest we recognise that parental/carer involvement is a major factor in a pupil's achievement and access to educational opportunities.

As part of our admissions procedures, we ask parents/carers if they are disabled and if they have any access needs which would make it easier for them to attend meetings and events and otherwise participate in school life in the same way as other parents/carers. E.g. ensuring that there is always wheelchair space at school events and parent consultations by telephone when they cannot access the Academy due to ill health or disability.

We endeavour to listen and take reasonable action where parents believe adjustments for disabled access may be necessary. For example, the push button opening main entrance and provision of additional disabled toilets.

Support and reasonable adjustments are made in identified circumstances e.g. additional transition visits to ensure a smooth transition to high school.

Risk Assessments have been completed when necessary to support the learning of children with specific difficulties.

We have a proactive approach to employing disabled members of staff. Recruitment monitoring takes place in accordance with Wakefield Council procedures.

All employees are asked to identify any barriers which they believe to affect them in their working environment, and how we can plan to overcome them.

This will include consideration of:

Induction, Training/Development/ Career opportunities and Retention

"Reasonable adjustments" to working conditions

Disability Equality Policy

Facilities and overall impressions

Results of questionnaire, minutes of meetings etc.

Evidence in Performance Management feedback

Informal discussions

Disclosures and Confidentiality

Under Law, if a disabled person has informed part of an organisation that he or she is disabled, it is then legally binding for that organisation to ensure the disabled person is not discriminated against and that “reasonable adjustments” are explored.

At Rook’s Nest we seek to continue to develop methods of sharing information about Disability, whilst balancing the disabled person’s possible concerns that this information is kept confidential.

On the admission of every child to Rook’s Nest Parents will be required to complete a questionnaire detailing medical issues. From this information the Academy will be able to liaise with outside agencies, where appropriate care plans will be drawn up or reasonable adjustments will be put into place Explanatory notes will accompany questionnaire with details of Government legislation.

It is important that pupils and parents/carers are made aware of the consequences of any request for complete confidentiality from school staff.

Rook’s Nest Academy will handle sensitively any information in accordance with our Safeguarding and Data Protection policies. However there are occasions when the Academy is legally obliged to share data with outside agencies such as Social Care Direct.

Our information shows that:

All areas of the curriculum are accessible to our current disabled children

All areas of school are accessible to disabled children and adults

All children on the school disability register who wish to do so, choose and participate in extra-curricular activities (in or out of school hours)

School practices and procedures are completed with an awareness of current disabled children in the school

The “social model” of disability, is the basis for our work to improve equality for and to tackle discrimination against, disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled.

Related Policies

The Academy has other policies which work in conjunction with the Disability and Equality Policy. These are:

- SEND Policy

Disability Equality Policy

- Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour/ Anti-bullying Policy
- Pay Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Accessibility access plan
- Data Protection Policy

