

## Southfields Academy

### Accessibility and adjustments

This accessibility statement should be read alongside the academy's Equality information and objectives, the SEN policy, the Academy's admissions policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. A hard copy of this statement is available from the academy on request.

The SEN Code of Practice stipulates that children with SEN should have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education. The concept of 'reasonable adjustments' is set out in the Equality Act 2010.

#### Accessibility

The Code of Practice includes among its fundamental principles that children with SEN should:

- have their needs met, and that this should normally happen within mainstream schools and settings
- have their views taken into account
- be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.

#### Success factors

The success factors include:

- designing the culture, practice, management and deployment of resources in a school or alternative setting to ensure that the needs of all children are met
- early identification of SEN
- taking account of the child's wishes in light of their age and understanding
- working in partnership with parents
- regularly reviewing interventions
- clear and detailed statements.

For students at the academy, success is also measured by their increasing independence and self-determination. In meeting the students' needs, the process must not prevent them or represent a barrier to students making and taking decisions about their future for themselves.

The Code of Practice refers to a child with SEN having access to:

- a designated member of staff with whom they can discuss difficulties or concerns. At Southfields Academy, all students with high levels of need such as those who have or may be considered for an Education, Health and Care Plan are allocated a key worker.
- the full curriculum and the provision of interventions, including technology, to facilitate this. At the academy, all planned interventions and provisions have a core goal of enabling the inclusion of all students in the broad and balanced curriculum.
- relevant services. The academy facilitates and participates in regular meetings with parents, professionals and other stakeholders to ensure the effective and efficient education of all students.

#### Adaptations to meet sensory and/or physical needs

Among the adaptations that may be required to meet the range of needs of children with sensory and/or physical needs the Code lists:

- appropriate seating, acoustic conditioning and lighting
- adaptations to the physical environment of the school
- adaptations to school policies and procedures
- access to alternative or augmented forms of communication
- provision of tactile and kinesthetic materials

- access to different amplification systems
- access to low vision aids
- access to specialist aids, equipment or furniture
- regular and frequent access to specialist support.

The academy adheres to these adjustments wherever possible and reasonable. We recognise that adjustments made specifically for one student may benefit other students within the class or the academy and that often these adjustments reflect the effective and efficient education of a range of students.

### **Other children with SEN**

Adaptations are equally important for students with communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning needs, and social, emotional and mental health needs. We constantly evaluate and review provisions and interventions for each aspect of need to ensure students are enabled to make progress and achieve.

The **School Admissions Code 2010** stipulates that local authorities must make free travel arrangements for 'eligible' children, which includes some children with SEN. This is determined on a case by case basis and forms part of the student's Annual Review. It is important that access to transport does not, over time, come to represent a substantial disadvantage to the student.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

The concept of 'reasonable adjustments' was introduced under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to avoid the disadvantage a disabled pupil experiences because of their impairment and has been incorporated into the **Equality Act 2010**.

Schools are required to take reasonable steps to avoid 'substantial disadvantage' where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage. Adjustments may be unnecessary where SEN provision means that a disabled child does not suffer a substantial disadvantage. However, disabled students may require reasonable adjustments in addition to SEN provision. It may also be that disabled students who do not have SEN do require reasonable adjustments to be made.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Teacher, SEN to monitor the range of provisions, interventions and curriculum adjustments made to ensure these do not represent a 'substantial disadvantage'. This is recorded and monitored on a weekly basis via the academy Inclusion Forum and is subject to on-going review. Where a provision, intervention or curriculum adjustment is deemed not to add value to a student's learning experience or to represent a substantial disadvantage to them, the Senior Teacher SEN, in consultation with members of the Inclusion Forum will terminate, suspend or modify the practice to address these concerns.

### **Starting point**

The **Equality and Human Rights Commission** advises that a useful starting point in determining what a reasonable adjustment might be is to consider how to ensure that disabled students can be involved in every aspect of school life, and that reasonable adjustments can often require little or no cost or disruption. An example the Commission provides is of a teacher always facing the class when addressing students to ensure that a pupil with hearing difficulties is able to lip-read.

From September 2012, the reasonable adjustments duty will be extended in the **Equality Act** to include provision of auxiliary aids and services to disabled students (not students with SEN). This applies to maintained schools, academies and non-maintained special schools, and can include:

- a piece of equipment
- the provision of a sign language interpreter, lip-speaker or deaf-blind communicator
- extra staff assistance
- an electronic or manual note-taking service
- induction loop or infrared broadcast system
- videophone

- audio-visual fire alarms
- readers for students with visual impairments
- assistance with guiding.

### **Current adjustments**

The school building has been designed and built to optimize access to the full site and the full curriculum for all those with disabilities, for example, lighting and window blinds have been selected so as to create conditions which reduce visual stress. The building has been designed in consultation with the Hearing Support Centre to ensure that background noise is reduced and all teaching and learning spaces are suitable for teaching those with a Hearing Impairment; for example, staff can easily operate technology in the classroom whilst facing the class to address them, ensuring that those who need to lip read are able to do so.

The academy's Disability Equality Policy clearly outlines adaptations made to the building and other adjustments made to ensure full and fair access to the curriculum for those with disabilities.

### **Complaints Procedures**

Complaints procedures with regards accessibility and reasonable adjustments are the same for those for all other aspect of the academy. Please refer to the complaints procedures on the academy website.