

## **Disability Policy – The Stephen Perse Foundation**

**This policy applies to the schools of the Stephen Perse Foundation (the ‘Foundation’), comprising the Pre-Preps in Madingley and the City, the Junior School, the Senior School, the Stephen Perse Sixth Form College (SPSFC) and Dame Bradbury’s school in Saffron Walden (the ‘Schools’). It is relevant to all students in the Foundation, including Early Years.**

### **Guiding Principles**

At The Stephen Perse Foundation all students are valued and we are committed to providing both equal access for all to the broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled, and high standards of teaching and learning responsive to individual need. The aim of this policy is to afford opportunity to all employees and pupils who are disabled and to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) whilst paying regard to the guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission “What equality law means for you as an education provider: schools”. The Foundation recognises that the definition of ‘disability’ has some overlap with the definition of ‘special educational needs’ (Children and Families Act 2014) and further information relating to our provision for students with special educational needs and learning difficulties can be found in the separate Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties Policy.

### **Policy Statement**

The Foundation is committed to maintaining and driving a positive culture towards the inclusion of disabled people in all the activities of the Schools. Where necessary staff are trained to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with employees and pupils who are disabled, though they are not expected - unless medically qualified or trained - to administer medication. The Foundation regularly reviews its Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of each School's curriculum, improving the physical environment of the Schools and improving access to information for employees, pupils and prospective pupils and their parents. The Foundation regularly reviews its Admissions Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and adopts user-friendly procedures for considering admissions from parents of disabled children, consulting with them about the reasonable adjustments which can be made to ensure that the admissions process is accessible for their children.

### **Definition of Disability**

A person has a disability if he or she 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 activity (Equality Act 2010):

- physical disability includes medical conditions for which a person needs to use a wheelchair, for

example, cerebral palsy or brittle bones;

- a mental impairment is a recognised mental illness which has been diagnosed, a severe learning difficulty or a psychiatric illness;
- "long-term" means a period of 12 months or longer.

Other disabilities which may amount to disability include:

- severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks (but not including tattoos or piercings);
- progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity;
- a controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a prosthesis, or a person with drug-controlled epilepsy or diabetes;
- a history of impairment, for example a person who used to be disabled and has recovered, for example, a person with a previous mental illness.

Disability does not include:

- hay fever sufferers;
- a person with antisocial tendencies such as paedophilia;
- a person who has a behavioural difficulty, for a reason other than a disability, for example, arising from social or domestic circumstances;
- a person who is addicted to nicotine, alcohol and other non-prescribed substances unless the addiction was originally the result of administration of medically prescribed drugs or other medical treatment.

## **Discrimination**

The Foundation will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures;
- in the terms on which a place at any School is offered;
- by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment;
- in the provision of education and associated services;
- in the way the Schools afford access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided by the Schools;
- by excluding a person on the grounds of his or her disability;
- by harassing a person with a disability;
- by victimising a person with a disability;
- by failing to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with non-disabled persons.

### **Admission procedure for pupils**

Each School is open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment and each application will be considered on its merits within the School's criteria for selection on the grounds of the child's ability and aptitude. The Registration Form will enable the parents to give details of their child's disability and on completion of this form the School will, if appropriate, request from the parents or the previous school full details in the form of medical reports, educational psychologist reports and any other report which assesses the child's disability so that the School can make an assessment of the reasonable adjustments that would be needed in order to provide adequately for the child's physical and educational needs.

Applications will be considered on the basis that all reasonable adjustments have been made by the School in order to cater for the child's disability (see definition below). The School will not offer a place if, after all reasonable adjustments have been made, the School will not be able to provide adequately or appropriately for the child's physical and educational needs. The School will inform the parents of its decision and give details of the reasonable adjustments it is prepared to make or give reasons why the offer of a place will not be made. Each application from a disabled child will be treated in a fair, open-minded way.

The Foundation's Admissions Policy is available on the Foundation's website. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and includes information about how the Foundation supports those applicants with a disability.

### **Education and associated services**

The Foundation has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided by each of its Schools. This is a broad expression that covers all aspects of school life. The range of activities that are covered by the expression include:

- the curriculum
- classroom organisation and timetabling
- access to school facilities
- school sports
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the serving of school meals
- assessment and examination arrangements
- school discipline and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, educational visits and other activities
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education.

### **Reasonable adjustments for pupils**

When providing educational services to a pupil, each School is legally required to make "reasonable adjustments" in order to cater for a pupil's disability and these adjustments may typically include:

- making arrangements for a child in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic child to complete an entrance exam;
- providing examination papers in larger print for a pupil with a visual impairment;
- rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend a class in an accessible part of the building;
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

The Foundation is not legally required to make adjustments which include:

- physical alterations such as the provision of a stair-lift or new ground floor facilities, such as a new library.

The Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". The Foundation will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

### **Reasonable adjustments for the public**

The Foundation may provide services to the public, for example at:

- open days
- parents' evenings
- concerts and plays
- exhibitions
- conferences (including residential conferences during holiday periods)
- use of sports facilities.

Where a physical feature (for example steps, entrances, exits, toilet facilities) makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to access the service, schools are required to take reasonable steps to:

- remove the feature; or
- alter it so it no longer has that effect; or
- provide reasonable means of avoiding the feature; or
- provide a reasonable alternative method of making the service available.

Where an auxiliary aid or service would enable a disabled person to make use of a service, schools are required to take reasonable steps to provide it. An auxiliary aid or service could be something as simple as extra assistance from a member of staff or a large print sign, or it might be a temporary ramp where

steps are preventing wheelchair access.

### **Disclosure**

Parents are requested to provide the Foundation with copies of the child's latest medical report, educational psychologist's report and any other information regarding his/her disability. If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that the Foundation has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's disability and the Foundation is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those disabilities, then the Foundation may withdraw the offer of a place, or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a pupil.

The Foundation will have due regard to any request by a parent or pupil (who has sufficient understanding of the nature and effect of the request) to treat the nature or existence of a person's disability as confidential.

### **Accessibility plans**

The Foundation has prepared an Accessibility Plan which is available, on request, to all parents and staff. The Accessibility Plan includes consideration of how the Foundation proposes to:

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the Foundation's curriculum;
- improve the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the Foundation;
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

The Plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, to ensure that it is up-to-date and covers all aspects of each School's life.

Please also refer to:

Admissions Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties Policy

### **Reviewed:**

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