



Kensington Park
SCHOOL

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Incorporating Annex: Policy for Reasonable Adjustments for Students

1. AIMS

Kensington Park School aims to ensure that any prospective student who fulfils our admissions requirements, is able to come to the School, without discrimination and irrespective of personal disability or special educational need, on a case by case basis.

Our educational principles are built around providing a secure, collaborative, non-discriminatory and caring learning environment. Whilst we have collective aspirations for all of our students to achieve and develop themselves, everyone is treated as an individual and places are offered within the School on a case by case basis, taking into account any reasonable adjustments the School can realistically make. We are therefore equally ambitious for our disabled students and staff.

2. LEGAL CONTEXT

This policy sets out the proposals of the School to increase access to education for disabled students in the three areas required by The Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”). The Act imposes a duty on the responsible body of a School to prepare an accessibility plan outlining how the School intends to improve access for disabled students to:

- Written information
- The curriculum
- The physical environment

Under the Act, disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Treating every child as an individual is vitally important. We therefore welcome students with disabilities and special educational needs, providing that our Learning Support Department can provide them with the support that they require. We do not however, have the facilities to offer highly specialised and intensive treatment. We require parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to discuss their child’s requirements with the Admissions department before their child sits our entrance exam so that we can make appropriate provision.

The School’s Admissions Policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation, including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new Equality Duty that covers all nine of the equality strands, known as protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. At KPS we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the School community and its life, everyone will be treated equally.

An Accessibility Plan exists to record planned and completed work to demonstrate the School’s commitment to continually improve access to its curriculum and facilities for those with accessibility needs. This plan is updated each term and reviewed by the Astrum Advisory Board annually, and in intervening periods when circumstances dictate.

The Accessibility Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies, strategies and

documents:

- The Prospectus
- The School Admissions Policy
- Terms and Conditions
- Registration Form
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy (Included Below)
- Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Achievement, Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy

3. STATEMENT OF INTENT

KPS is committed to providing a non-discriminatory environment which values and includes all students, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their educational, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. The Admissions Policy and Reasonable Adjustments Policy seek to remove barriers to entry for prospective students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the School strives to ensure that each and every student can take part in the whole School curriculum, including a broad range of co-curricular activities and School trips. The School takes a fully inclusive approach to staff recruitment and aims to appoint the best person based on their skills and qualifications, regardless of any disability they might have.

KPS seeks to work closely in partnership with parents in order to get the best outcome for all students at the School. It is therefore mandatory that parents disclose the needs of a student prior to their entry to the School, as we feel it essential to have this knowledge in order to best support individual students.

The School Accessibility Plan considers:

- The views and aspirations of those children receiving special provision. The School seeks to address issues raised e.g. inability to climb stairs on an individual basis as necessary.
- The views and aspirations of the parents of children receiving special provision e.g. through parent consultation evenings with a member of the Learning Support Department.
- The views of external surveying companies who have visited and assessed the School campus. Appropriate adjustments to buildings are built into the planned cycle of building works, prioritised as necessary by the Facilities Manager.

The School plans, over time, to increase the accessibility of provision for all students, staff and visitors in the following areas:

- To inform staff of their rights under equality law in all School recruiting adverts.
- To increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the School curriculum by adapting curricular activities to ensure as much access as possible for all students.
- To improve the physical environment of the School to increase access to education by disabled students e.g. through appropriate use of technology to aid learning and to make disabled access as easy as possible.
- To improve the delivery of information to students, staff, parents and visitors with disabilities, through clearly defined job descriptions, disability advice in staff handbooks and guidance given to Heads of Faculty responsible for students or staff with disabilities.

4. ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Students with special educational needs, or with disabilities requiring extra support, are supported by our specialist Learning Support Department. KPS's SEND Policy can be downloaded from the School website or requested from the Admissions Department.

KPS aims to support and see students progress through the School from age 2-18. It is acknowledged that on occasion, a student will be identified who will not thrive in the KPS environment. These

students will be monitored and supported as far as possible by their class teachers and the Learning Support Department. If the concern continues and/or the student's happiness and wellbeing is compromised, a decision will be taken as to whether the School can provide the most appropriate learning environment for the student. Parents will always be involved in this process.

Since the formation of the School's Accessibility Plan, the following steps have been taken to improve the accessibility of disabled students to the curriculum:

- The parents of all prospective students with special educational needs, including medical or physical disabilities, are encouraged to discuss their needs prior to our entrance procedures to enable us to make any adjustments that may be necessary;
- On acceptance of a place, the Parent Contract requires parents to declare any psychological, physical, medical or special educational needs, disability or allergy that a child has or subsequently develops;
- Staff receive ongoing training to enable them to understand the needs of SEND and disability.
- Individual support reports are prepared to inform teaching staff about the needs of SEND students and to offer specific guidance on appropriate adjustments and strategies for teaching. These can be accessed by all teaching staff via the SIMS programme;
- ICT resources have been introduced to screen for SEND in all new students to the School.

5. PHYSICAL ACCESS

Despite the historic nature of much of our site, KPS is committed to improving accessibility to our buildings wherever it can. A full accessibility audit of every building has been conducted.

An historic estate such as ours, poses challenges to adaptation and accessibility and as a result it is unlikely that every room in the School is able to be made physically accessible to all. However, many alterations have already been completed to the physical environment, all with the aim of adapting and making accessible as many areas as possible across the School sites.

Further adaptations would need to be made on a case by case basis should a student with such needs present. Having addressed the major physical obstacle to access in these two houses, the School is as prepared as it can be in advance of such a requirement being necessary.

6. IMPROVING THE DELIVERY TO DISABLED PEOPLE OF INFORMATION THAT IS PROVIDED IN WRITING

All written communication, either hard copy or electronic, can be provided on request, in a suitable format to enable access. This includes large print and audio formats.

7. SCHOOL LAYOUT AND FACILITIES

The School buildings are a mixture of purpose-built facilities and converted town houses including some historic and/or listed buildings of several stories spread over several blocks adjacent to residential and other property.

Whilst there are fixed classrooms for some subjects, students regularly move from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings without lifts. The boarding house, sporting, recreational and co-curricular facilities are often part of buildings with split levels, many of them without lifts.

The School has a Nurse who provides support during the School term. The Nurse and pastoral care staff are available to discuss student's health problems and/or medical conditions with parents as well as School staff as appropriate.

Annex:

POLICY FOR REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR STUDENTS

For the purpose of clarification, the School is legally required to make reasonable adjustments in order to cater for a child's disability and seeks to comply fully with this requirement. The following pages outline how the School seeks to make adjustments to its current access arrangements.

1. INTRODUCTION

KPS is committed to treating all people equally. According to the Equality Act 2010, we must take reasonable steps to ensure that those with disabilities are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with those who are not disabled.

KPS recognises that each person is unique. This policy does not therefore seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of our policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for those with disabilities and the factors the School will take into account when considering requests for adjustments.

2. WHEN DOES THE DUTY ARISE?

We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students, staff and applicants who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010, when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who do not have disabilities. A person is disabled if they suffer from a physical or mental impairment that has substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In most cases, disabilities will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

3. WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE DUTY?

KPS seeks to ensure that no one is put at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments:

- to our policies, criteria and practices (i.e. the way we plan and do things); and
- by providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. additional support or assistance).

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples include:

- pieces of equipment;
- extra staff assistance;
- note-taking;
- induction loops;
- audio-visual fire alarms;
- readers; and
- assistance with guiding.

4. WHAT IS NOT COVERED?

KPS is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities. Similarly, we do not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the School.

5. ENTRY TESTS

KPS welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities that the School offers and can flourish in the caring environment which we provide.

We are allowed by law to apply an entry test, and we do so as part of our admissions process. If necessary, we make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants sitting the entry test, such as, for example, allowing it to be completed on computer rather than by hand. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment.

6. EXAMINATION – ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Access Arrangements for External Examinations and other SEND issues are covered separately within the *SEN and Disability Policy*.

7. HOW DO I REQUEST AN ADJUSTMENT?

KPS prides itself on considering whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled applicant or student. However, we do not always think of all possible adjustments and we want to work with parents to think as creatively as possible about this matter.

If your child is disabled and you believe that they are being put at a substantial disadvantage compared with students without disabilities and there is an adjustment that we could make which would overcome this, you are encouraged to write to the relevant the Head of the Sixth Form or Head of the Lower School, setting out in full the adjustment that the School could put into practice.

8. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

In some cases, the School will be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment as soon as possible. In other cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult, require planning consent due to being a listed building or more financially costly, we may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the substantial disadvantage that the student or applicant is suffering and what measures it is reasonable for the School to take. In these cases, the School may seek input from teachers, other experts such as doctors and/or educational psychologists, parents/carers and the child in question.

9. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DECIDE WHETHER AN ADJUSTMENT IS REASONABLE?

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the School will consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the student;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under an Educational, Health and Care Needs and Provision (EHCP) from the Local Authority;
- the School's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other students (and potential students).

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

The School is sensitive to all matters of confidentiality and the parents and/or the prospective student may request that the existence or nature of the disability be treated as confidential by the School. KPS will take any such request into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable.

11. OUTCOME

Once the School has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, the School will write to the parents, setting out the decision and the reasons.

12. WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE SCHOOL'S DECISION?

If you are not happy with the School's decision about the reasonableness of the adjustment, you may lodge a complaint using the School's Complaints Procedure.

Approved by Headmaster 05 October 2021

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