

**THE ARTS EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS, LONDON  
DAY SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY  
THREE YEAR DISABILITY ACCESS PLAN**

**STATEMENT OF INTENT**

All our pupils, staff and visitors should feel valued, cared for, listened to and encouraged to challenge themselves to be the best they can. It is our aim to reduce and eliminate barriers to the curriculum, fuller aspects of school life and the school environment for pupils and prospective pupils, staff, parents and visitors with a disability. Whilst we are aware that our listed building presents certain restrictions and constraints with regard to disability access, it is our aim to be as inclusive as possible and to comply with our moral and legal responsibilities under the *Equality Act (2010)*.

Here, we outline how we will endeavour to promote disability equality for all disabled pupils, staff, parents, governors and visitors to our school over the next three years.

Reference - Equality Act 2010.

From 1 October 2010, the Equality Act replaced most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to apply. The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of:

- Employment
- Education
- Access to goods, services and facilities

The Equality Act also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. This can apply to a carer or parent of a disabled person. In addition, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are wrongly perceived to be disabled.

**NB:** A person is defined as having a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a “substantial and long-term adverse effect” on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activity (Equality Act 2010).

For more information, please visit <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/>

We recognise our responsibility to ensure that:

- We do not to treat disabled/ injured pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability/injury (whether temporary or lifelong);
- We will make reasonable adjustments for disabled/ injured pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- We will plan to increase access to education for disabled/ injured pupils;
- We do not discriminate against anyone as explained in the DDA, 1995;
- We do not allow any form of harassment of people with a disability/injury;
- We will promote positive attitudes towards anyone living with a disability/ injury;
- We do all that we can to remove barriers which may discourage disabled/ injured people from playing a full part in the life of our school; and
- We will encourage full participation by everyone in our school activities

**Principles:**

- Compliance with the above-mentioned legislation is consistent with the school's aims, Equal Opportunities Policy and the operation of the school's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy;
- We recognise that it is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled/ injured pupil by excluding him or her from the school for a reason related to the pupil's impairment;
- When recruiting staff, disabled people will not be discriminated against; and
- We recognise and value parents' and carers' knowledge of their child's disability/ injury and seek partnership and consultation.

**Specialist Context:**

ArtsEd is an independent, vocational school for the performing arts located in a small city centre site in a part-listed building. Most of the classrooms and studios are based on the first floor, which can be accessed via stairs or by a lift if there is a medical or physical ability need. There are four additional spaces on the ground floor, of these, one is accessed via a level floor, and the others have two-step stairs, or a ramp is available to support access. It is often necessary for pupils and staff to be able to move from classroom to studio, and from floor to floor, during the day. During most days it is also necessary for a pupil to change into vocational clothing, and the changing spaces are located on the first floor. The Sixth Form also use four performing arts studios in a local community facility, all these spaces are accessible via stairs and multiple lifts.

The Trustees' (Governors) ongoing strategy is to ensure that any future development of the building will ensure that disability access is taken into account. A new extension to the building is planned for 2018-20, and disability access for pupils, staff, and audiences is central to the planning of the new parts of the building.

Due to the vocational nature of the school with its significant focus on the Performing Arts (and the emphasis on movement and dance) we have never received any applications from prospective pupils with significant physical disabilities. Currently if a pupil is injured and needs support moving around the building (for example on crutches), the majority of their teaching and learning could still be accommodated within our existing physical environment.

Pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) needs could be assisted due to the ongoing investment in interactive whiteboards. This allows images to be enlarged to benefit those with a visual impairment. It would also be possible to download teaching notes to enable the pupil to read using specialist software for visually impaired pupils at home. Larger print course notes and examination papers would also be introduced as and when required.

The provision of hearing loops has been considered but with the dispersed nature of the classrooms, it is not financially viable to install such a system. A hearing loop was installed in the main theatre in 2016, but this is unlikely to be of significant use to a hearing impaired pupil as no teaching takes place there outside of production rehearsals.

In any admissions case, we advise parents to make direct contact with the Admissions Secretary (Rosalie Jones) prior to an audition. The Admissions Secretary would consider the best way for the pupil to be supported in terms of effectively accessing the different elements of the audition process. If a pupil was offered a place at the school, a member of the Senior Leadership Team would meet with the pupil and his/her parents/carers to explore whether or not the individual's access needs could be successfully accommodated.

### **Access to The School**

The school is a part-listed building, and as such our physical facilities for persons with disabilities are limited. We will however make every reasonable adjustment in order to accommodate the needs of applicants, pupils, parents/guardians, visitors and members of staff who have disabilities.

A dedicated disabled parking bay can be allocated in the front car park, with access available through the front double-doors via a ramp.

Access between each floor is by stairwell, however a lift is available to anyone who requires it for medical or disability reasons.

### **Admissions**

Parents/guardians of prospective pupils must notify the school of any disabilities in advance of registration and must discuss with the school what adjustments could reasonably be made to accommodate their child. The school may request a full report from a doctor or educational psychologist to help determine whether it can properly fulfil its legal and moral responsibilities to the child and its contractual duties to the parents/guardians.

In particular, the school will do all it reasonably can to ensure that the child can, with reasonable adjustments, access the curriculum, whether in the classroom or through other

means. The school also expects all of its pupils to participate in music, drama, trips and expeditions as part of its ethos of inclusiveness, but must ensure that no pupil's education or safety is put at risk by the needs of another individual.

### **Existing Pupils**

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing pupils which may require adjustments to be made to the way in which the curriculum is delivered.

Parents/guardians must, as soon as possible, disclose to the school in confidence any known medical condition, health problem or allergy affecting an existing pupil. Where appropriate, the Headteacher will set up a consultation process so that interim measures can be put in place to support the pupil, and that longer term requirements may be determined. The school will, to the best of its ability, make such adjustments as are reasonably practicable to allow a pupil to continue at the school.

### **Learning Difficulties**

The school shall do all that is reasonably possible to detect and deal appropriately with a learning difficulty, which amounts to a 'special educational need'. The staff are not however, qualified to make a diagnosis of dyslexia, dyspraxia, or other learning difficulties. The screening tests available to schools are indicative only; and they are not infallible. Parents/guardians will be notified if a screening test indicates that a pupil may have a learning difficulty. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange any formal assessments, and the school can help with this process by recommending specialist help if requested.

### **Withdrawal of a Pupil**

If, following the process of consultation and the making of all reasonable adjustments, it is the professional judgement of the Headteacher that the school cannot provide adequately for the pupil's disability or special educational needs, parents/guardians will be asked to withdraw the pupil. In such cases, every reasonable effort shall be made by the school to assist in finding a suitable placement in another school.

### **Prospective Staff Members**

Prospective staff members must notify the school of any disabilities as part of their application and must discuss with the school what adjustments could reasonably be made to accommodate them should they be employed. The school may request a full report from a doctor to help determine whether it can properly fulfil its legal, moral and contractual responsibilities to the prospective staff member, its pupils and their parents/guardians.

### **Existing Staff Members**

The school recognises that medical and psychological conditions can develop in existing staff members which may require adjustments to be made to the way in which they are employed. Existing staff members must, as soon as possible, disclose to the school in confidence any known medical condition or health problem. Where appropriate, the Headteacher shall set up a consultation process so that interim measures can be put in

place to support the staff member, and that longer term requirements may be determined. The school will, to the best of its ability, make such adjustments as are reasonably practicable to allow a staff member to continue at the school.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

The school shall make reasonable adjustments to aid a prospective or existing pupil/staff member. Such adjustments may include (but not limited to):

- Installing low gradient ramps for easy access on the ground floor;
- Allocating a classroom on the ground floor;
- Specialist seating or any other relevant resources or equipment.

In defining what is reasonable, the school shall take into account:

- The cost and feasibility of making specific alterations to the school premises;
- Implications on financial resources and the likelihood of any external funding being available to offset this;
- Staffing requirements;
- Health and safety considerations;
- The interests of pupils, staff and visitors.

### **Personal Information**

All personal information provided to the school regarding a pupil or staff member's disabilities shall be treated in strictest confidence and only used in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

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### **Review of Three Disability Access Policy**

Policy written:	September 2015
Policy written by:	Adrian Blake
Policy reviewed by Adrian Blake:	January 2017
Next review date:	January 2018

Circulated to the Principal, Governing body and teaching staff. This policy will be made available to parents and pupils on the website and on request.

KEY ISSUE	ACTION	BY WHEN	RESPONSIBLE
Dance studios have a threshold step of 6cm which would make access difficult for wheelchair users	A portable threshold ramp to enable wheelchair access has been sourced	March 2016	Facilities Manager
Vision panels on some internal corridor doors are set above the height suitable for wheelchair users	Vision panels in doors to be adjusted to a low level suitable for wheelchair users	August 2018	Facilities Manager
Building Extension 2018-19. Access to areas and services may become restricted due to building work	Alternative means of safe access to be provided for anyone with disabilities. To include temporary ramps or other aids as necessary	2017-18	Facilities Manager
Emergency or planned maintenance works or repairs may restrict access to areas and services	Ensure that when necessary access for disabled persons are planned for and adequate arrangements are made to allow safe access around any building works	Ongoing	Facilities Manager