



# Heathside Preparatory School

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## DISABILITY POLICY (REVISED JAN 2010)

### Introduction

Heathside Preparatory School is a non-selective co-educational preparatory school for pupils between the ages of rising 3 and 11. The School is an inclusive school that aims to provide a full and balanced curriculum for all of our students. We try to accommodate children with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds irrespective of disability.

### Definition of Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This definition includes children with a wide range of impairments, including learning disabilities, dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and dyslexia, whose ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantially impaired and long-term. Physical disabilities include asthma, diabetes, cancer recovery, disfigurement, lack of limbs, sickle cell anaemia, and epilepsy.

### Heathside's Values and Philosophy

Heathside School is committed to making the curriculum and facilities accessible so that all children can participate in all aspects of school life. We positively aim not to discriminate against disabled pupils in our admissions or in their access to education. We welcome and value students irrespective of their race, colour, beliefs or impairments. Our teachers set high expectations and plan and differentiate appropriately for all children with and without disabilities. In addition, the school will try to respond to our pupil's diverse needs and avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

### Pupils at Heathside (Easter Term 2010)

At Heathside Preparatory School we do not currently have any statemented children but we have approximately 15 children on School Action who receive support. Of these we have approximately 10 children between years 3 and 5 who are dyslexic. There are two to four children with ADHD, three children who are dyspraxic, one child with diabetes and several children who have asthma. In addition several children have speech or language disorders. In the past we have had children with autism and epilepsy, but we have not yet had any pupils who are immobile.

Many of these children have IEPs and receive learning support in school. Learning support is provided in small groups or individually by a teacher who has special training in teaching children with specific learning difficulties. At Heathside, all of our children, regardless of disability, have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum, including activities not on school sites, such as sports, school trips and so on. Before school trips take place, teachers carry out a risk assessment to make sure that all students can access the site and learning.

We aim to ensure that all of our pupils, including those with disabilities, fulfil the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda (be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being).

### **School Buildings**

The Upper and Lower Schools are housed in two separate buildings, both of which are old Victorian buildings. The Upper School is built on four levels. The lower ground floor is wheelchair accessible and has accessible toilets. Currently wheelchair access to levels above the lower ground floor is restricted. The Lower School is wheelchair accessible on the ground floor and a new wheelchair accessible entrance is being developed to the lower ground floor and is due for completion in February 2010. There is a toilet with disabled access on the lower ground floor. There are no immediate plans to install lifts in either building as the cost is prohibitive and there is insufficient space.

### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

Our teaching staff are aware of the individual learning difficulties our pupils may have, and use inclusive teaching strategies so that their individual needs can be accommodated. They liaise with the support teachers to provide accommodations to the curriculum, teaching methods and assessment whenever necessary. For example, a dyslexic or dyspraxic pupil may be allowed to dictate their work to the teacher or use a word processor when they are unable to complete a longer writing assignment.

### **Staff Awareness and Training**

Staff are provided with detailed assessment summaries and teaching recommendations for pupils with disabilities. This information is available from the support teacher, and staff attend relevant disability-related courses and INSET days when necessary. Teachers are aware of the support teacher's role in conducting assessments to determine any reasonable adjustments required. Outside specialists such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and psychologists consult with the staff whenever necessary.

### **Priorities for Improvements to Facilities for Disabled Pupils**

The School constantly strives to improve the experience of all children and is currently targeting these priorities for disabled pupils:

- Greater access to laptops and computers for children with dyslexia and dyspraxia.
- Greater access to information presented visually for children with auditory processing disorders (to improve symbol recognition and writing skills).
- Additional training to include INSET on ADHD and how to improve ADHD pupils' abilities to learn and focus in the classroom.
- Ensuring that pupils who may have learning difficulties in the Lower School receive early assessment and intervention.
- Completing lower ground floor innovations at the Lower School and increasing access for wheelchair users to the lower ground floor and the garden.