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Frensham Heights

Section 4.2 Disability Policy

This policy applies to Frensham Heights School. It is applicable to the whole school community including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the boarding community.

Guiding Principles

All students at Frensham are valued and the school is 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 needs. The aim of this policy is to afford opportunity to all employees and students who are disabled and to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 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". Frensham 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 Policy.

Policy Statement

Frensham is committed to maintaining and driving a positive culture towards the inclusion of disabled people in all activities of the school and the boarding accommodation. Where necessary and appropriate, staff are trained to understand types of disabilities and how to deal with employees and students who are disabled, though they are not expected - unless medically qualified or trained - to administer medication. The School regularly reviews its Accessibility Plan with the aim of increasing the accessibility of the curriculum, improving the physical environment of the campus and boarding accommodation and improving access to information for employees, students and prospective students and their parents. Frensham regularly reviews their 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 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):

- 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 activities;
 - 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

Frensham will not knowingly discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures;
- in the terms on which a place, including a boarding place, 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 School afford access to any benefit, service or facility offered or provided;
- 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 students

Frensham is open to applications from any prospective student with a physical and/or mental impairment and each application will be considered on its merits within Frensham's criteria for selection on the grounds of the student'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/Specialist assessor 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 Frensham in order to cater for the child's disability (see definition below). Frensham will not offer a place, or a boarding 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 or the offer of a boarding place will not be made. Each application from a disabled child will be treated in a fair, open-minded way.

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

Education and associated services

Frensham has an ongoing duty to make reasonable adjustments in respect of the education and associated services provided. 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
- extra curricula, educational visits and other activities
- preparation for the next phase of education.

Reasonable adjustments for students

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

- making arrangements for a student in a wheelchair to attend an interview in an accessible ground floor room;
- allowing extra time for a dyslexic student to complete an entrance exam;

- providing examination papers in larger print for a student with a visual impairment;
- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

Frensham 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 students as part of the duty to make "reasonable adjustments". Frensham 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

Frensham may provide services to the public, for example at:

- open days
- parents' evenings
- concerts and plays
- exhibitions
- 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 required to provide the school with copies of the child's latest medical report, Educational Psychologist/Specialist assessor's report and any other information regarding his/her disability. If, following the offer of the place, it is discovered that Frensham has not received full disclosure of information relating to the child's disability and the school is not able to make reasonable adjustments for those disabilities, then the school may withdraw the offer of a place, the offer of a boarding place or ask the parents to withdraw a child who is already a student.

The school will have due regard to any request by a parent or student (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

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

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

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