

MORE HOUSE SCHOOL

POLICY

DISABILITY

Rationale:

More House School exists to educate boys with specific learning difficulties. Admission to the school depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to enable the school to maintain and, if possible, to improve, the educational and general standards for all its pupils commensurate with the ethos to which the school aspires. It is therefore of importance that the school feels reasonably sure that it has the correct skill sets to be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his potential.

This policy is in place to ensure that every pupil, with or without disability, has the chance of completing a happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well- educated and well-rounded adult with a good prospect of a satisfying life. This 'Disability Policy' has taken reference from the Equality Act 2010 (2018), the Children and Families Act 2014, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015 updated 2021). The definition of disability, according to the Equality Act, states that a child or young person is disabled 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 activities.

Purpose:

- To apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware.
- To apply the school's obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of their disability.
- To plan for parents and visitors to the school who also might be wheel chair users.

Broad Guidelines:

In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality. One of the obvious problems which the school has is its layout which covers a wide area and is located on the side of a hill overlooking the Surrey countryside. Although many classrooms are single-storied buildings, hill gradients to certain of these teaching areas, constitutes a risk to wheelchair users.

The boarding facilities pose similar problems. It is not hard to conclude that any pupil with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some educational and other facilities the school offers. Nor can these matters be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the school at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long-term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

Definition of Disability:

As defined under the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobility impairments
- Sensory impairments (visual, hearing)
- Learning difficulties and disabilities (including ASD, ADHD)
- Mental health conditions
- Chronic illnesses

Accessibility and Physical Environment:

Due to the school's location on a steep hillside, we recognise that certain parts of the campus may present challenges. In response:

- We conducted an Audit with the Governors for this and maintain ongoing improvements as opportunities arise.
- Where possible, we will make structural alterations (e.g., ramps, lifts, handrails) to improve access.
- Where full physical access is not currently achievable, we will:
 - Adapt timetables and room use as required.
 - Offer alternative access to activities or learning spaces.
 - Provide staff and pupil support or technological solutions (e.g., live video links, portable equipment).
 - Escort wheelchair users around site.
- Teaching and learning are differentiated to meet additional needs, including those that arise from disabilities.
- Specialist equipment and support are used where appropriate.
- Staff receive pertinent training as required.

Discrimination:

More House School 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.

Admissions:

The school welcomes applications from students with disabilities and will assess each application on a case-by-case basis, focusing on how we can meet the child's 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, 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. The school's Admissions Policy is available on the school's website. It applies equally to all prospective students and includes information about how the school supports those applicants with a disability

Upon successful applications to the school, transition planning includes full consideration of accessibility, support requirements, and physical arrangements. Parents and carers are actively involved in all decision-making.

Service Delivery:

More House School 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:

When providing educational services to a student, the school 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.
- providing examination papers in larger print for a student with a visual impairment.

- arranging a variety of accessible sports activities.

The school 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 Learning Development Centre. 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". More House School will carefully consider any proposals and will not unreasonably refuse any requests for such aids and services to be provided.

Staff and Employment:

More House School is an equal opportunities employer. We strive to make reasonable adjustments to support staff with disabilities, including adaptations to the working environment where appropriate on such a site.

Conclusion:

More House School is confident that it can offer a full curriculum to all its students. Improvements in its provision for wheelchair users will be on-going, and wherever possible ramps and hard tarmac surfaces to paths and driveways will be implemented. The school cannot comply in its entirety to the 'Act' due to the physical steepness of the sloping hillside that is the terrain of More House School but always make best endeavours to do so. The partially sighted will also be given due to consideration when creating paths to access school buildings.