

**John
Cabot
Academy**

**Disability &
Accessibility Policy**

Date Adopted: November 2016, John Cabot Academy
Review Date: Every two years

1. Introduction

1.1. The Academy's policy is to apply its entry criteria to all students and potential students regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled student or potential student at a substantial disadvantage compared with any student who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability. A separate document outlines the Academy's entry criteria. Details of the arrangements that are made for any child needing special consideration in the entrance test for Year 6 are described below.

1.2. The Academy has an Equalities Policy which is designed to ensure that all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, have appropriate access to all of the opportunities available to any member of the Academy community. The Academy operates with the belief that all students' education and experience is enhanced by the inclusion of students with diverse abilities, social and cultural backgrounds, and varying needs in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 which came into force in September 2014.

1.3. One of the obvious problems which John Cabot Academy has (in common with many other academies) is its layout which covers a reasonably wide area and consists of separate buildings of several storeys. Another is the system, again common to many academies, of having fixed classrooms for each subject, based on the valid grounds of having all the facilities for one subject in one place. This requires students to go from classroom to classroom, often up steps or stairs in buildings.

It is possible that a student with impaired mobility is going to be put at a disadvantage by these problems, if not prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational and other facilities the Academy offers. Whereas some minor adjustments can be made to the siting of teaching rooms, these specific problems cannot be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments short of making major alterations to physical features of the Academy at prohibitive cost. Even the fruition of long term plans can only go some way to ameliorate the position.

1.4. The Academy has a Health and Safety Committee which consists of the Principal, the Business Manager, an Academy Councillor, the SENCO, the Building Services Manager and senior staff from faculty areas, whose expertise in any field would be of assistance. The Committee's terms of reference include:

- a) to review the Academy's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect students and prospective students who are disabled;
- b) to make recommendations to the Principal and the Academy Council with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects to students or prospective students with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future and to prepare this Disability Policy;
- c) to review the Disability and Accessibility Plan as necessary and at least every two years. The following areas have been considered in detail by the Committee with the results set out over page.

2. Admissions

2.1. The Committee has reviewed the Academy's admissions literature, policy, examinations and procedures. An amendment to the admission form has been introduced which requests information about significant medical issues and learning difficulties. The committee is content that the Academy is

accessible to students of all disabilities and that, wherever possible, reasonable adjustments have been made.

2.2. We recognise that students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have needs, and the Admissions Authority takes into account this information when considering an admission to the Academy.

2.3. Reading aids may be used if recommended by an educational psychologist or medical practitioner. Entrance test papers will be produced in large font should this be considered desirable.

3. Education

3.1 The Committee, with advice taken from the SEND team and pastoral leaders in the Academy, will regularly consider:

- a) The problems of physical access caused by the fixed classroom system.
- b) The difficulties of access to the education generally for specified types of disability: [e.g. sight or hearing impaired, dyslexia, Asperger's syndrome, cerebral palsy, etc.]
- c) The social needs of those with Asperger's syndrome.

3.2 Adjustments implemented are as follows:

- a) Appropriate seating for the sight and visually impaired students.
- b) Enlarged notes and documents for the sight impaired.
- c) Appropriate staff training.
- d) Special risk assessment for trips and activities.

3.3 A Learning Support Register produced by the SENCO identifying students with particular needs which is regularly updated and on which staff are regularly briefed.

3.4 Adjustments as practicable or necessary in practical subjects such as assistance from a peer, technician or learning support assistant as available, observation rather than participation in the interests of safety, etc.

3.5 Where possible, provide support from LSAs in classes where the teacher requests reasonable assistance.

3.6 Provide access to the Learning Support Department outside the timetable for those with special educational needs. Support will be provided for these students where possible and reasonable.

3.7 IEPs, (Individual Education Plan), will be followed for all students with a Statement of need / Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

3.8 Statements / EHCPs will be continued to be reviewed annually.

3.9 There will be risk assessments for the movement around the Academy of students with special educational needs.

3.10 Facilitating students who wish to use their own lap top computers or other devices to assist learning.

- 3.11 Where possible, the Academy will provide separate rooms, especially in the Learning Support Department for those who have specific SEND where a more specialist provision and facilities might be required.
- 3.12 The Academy will provide for the needs of students outlined in exam access arrangements in line with the JCQ publication "Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special consideration". This includes extra time, private rooms, and access to computers, amanuenses, and voice recognition software.
- 3.13 Where possible, south facing windows in classrooms will be fitted with blinds or curtains to help those with visual sensitivity.
- 3.14 To this end there is an ongoing programme to cover all bare strip lights with covers.

4. Recreational Activities

The Committee has considered the difficulties of access to the particular activities for specified types of disability. Staff, in discussion with parents and the students involved, will continue to ensure that all adjustments possible, in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any particular disability, as they have been to date.

5. Sporting Education and Activities

- 5.1 The PE department has considered the difficulties of access to education generally for specified types of disability. No child is excluded from the PE and Games curriculum because of difficulties like dyspraxia, neuro-developmental delay or cerebral palsy.
- 5.2 The PE Department, in discussion with parents and the students involved, will continue to ensure that all adjustments possible in line with common sense and practical application, will be made for any particular disability.

6. Welfare

- 6.1 We have considered the difficulties which might arise for specified types of disability. The Academy's responses to difficulties such as bullying, non-integration, physical and mental upset or health problems. These apply equally to students with disabilities and without. There is a clear complaints procedure for students and parents. Staff at JCA understand that one of their roles is to ensure the welfare of everyone.
- 6.2 The Academy's comprehensive pastoral system already in place, incorporates teachers, tutors, Heads of Community, Safeguarding Champion, Engagement Leader and counsellor. There are frequent meetings of pastoral leaders and the whole staff to ensure that all students, especially those with special needs and disabilities, are regularly reviewed. All students are made aware of the support available to them through the Personal Health and Social Education programme, tutor periods, assemblies, notices and other means.

7. Awareness and Observance of the Policy

- 7.1 The governors recognise the need not only to set up procedures to consider the challenges of disability, but also to ensure all involved at John Cabot Academy are aware of the measures set up and that these are observed. As such, the existing machinery in the Academy for ensuring awareness and observance of the policy is outlined below:
 - a) Comprehensive guidance in the staff handbooks.

- b) Guidance in the Learning Support Policy.
- c) Guidance in PSHE sessions, assemblies and tutor periods.
- d) Meetings of Senior Leadership Team.
- e) Meetings of the Health and Safety Committee.
- f) Meetings, as appropriate, involving parents, student, Head of Community, SEND team and other pastoral support staff.
- g) Training for teaching and non teaching staff.
- h) Frequent communication between SEND team and teaching staff.

7.2 Where possible, the Academy tries to improve student and staff awareness of the needs of all groups in the community. Currently this happens on each Thursday morning.

8. Accessibility Plan

8.1 An access audit is to be undertaken to assess the feasibility, practicability and implications involved in making physical alterations.

Facilities to enable accessibility at John Cabot Academy include:

- There are lifts at the C Wing end of the main building and in the Cabot Eye.
- There is marked accessible parking with room for two cars adjacent to a ramp providing access to the main building front and side doors.
- The nosing of steps into the main building and around the site are painted with high visibility paint.
- There are two DDA compliant toilets in the main building and one in the Cabot Eye.
- There is a height adjustable work station in the food tech room.

Access to the curriculum and necessary adjustments:

- Technology will be employed to improve access to the curriculum for visually impaired students.
- Staffing levels and training to ensure all students can go on Academy trips.
- Continued training of staff to support students with SEND : dyslexia, visual impairment, hearing impairment, etc.
- The social needs of students with autistic spectrum conditions will be managed to ensure a stable educational experience and full access to the curriculum.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in November 2018.