



Disability Equality Policy

Equality Statement

Centre Academy East Anglia is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief. We provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment

Review Date: Sept-25

Last Review Date: Sept-24

Held on website: Yes

Signed by Chair of Proprietor Body

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Murphy'.

Signed:
Chair of Proprietor Body

Mr R Murphy

Date: 12/09/24

Centre Academy East Anglia is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Part One: Equal Opportunities Statement of Commitment

Centre Academy East Anglia is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability, or religious belief.

Any behaviour, comments or attitudes that undermine or threaten an individual's self-esteem on these grounds will not be tolerated. We aim to provide equal access to high quality educational opportunities and to ensure that everyone feels that they are a valued member of the school community. We seek to provide a safe and happy environment where all can flourish and where cultural diversity is celebrated.

CAEA is committed to ensuring that individuals are treated equally and fairly. Decisions on pupils (their enrolment, grading, teaching, and involvement in school activities) and employees (their recruitment, selection, and training, conditions of work, promotion, career, and management) and every other aspect of employment and pupils' education are based solely on objective and educational service-related criteria.

We aim to empower our pupils to make informed choices so that they are better prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life within their community. Equality of opportunity cannot be realised without the involvement and commitment of all members of the school community. In addition, a common understanding of the pivotal role of equal opportunities in the context of the school's ethos and values, (in particular, the recognition that the role of all staff is crucial in the delivery of the objectives of the policy is essential).

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's equal opportunities policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with the policy.

Aims and objectives

From 1st October 2010, the Equality Act came into force, replacing previous anti-discrimination laws (Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) with a single Act. The Act places on all staff, managers and the proprietor of CAEA to facilitate education and learning for all pupils affected. From 1 September 2012 the Act introduced a new aspect to the reasonable adjustments duty: "where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, [a duty] to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid".

The Governance and School, through the adopted Equal Opportunities Policy, aim to:

- *Carry out their legal duty in complying with the relevant legislation
- *Reinforce the school's position as a provider of high-quality education and as a good employer providing development opportunities.
- *Maintain and drive a positive culture of anti-discrimination towards disabled people.
- *Ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda.
- *Establish good people management practice and set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response.
- *Achieve a staffing composition that reflects the composition of the wider community.
- *Ensure all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil, giving training to staff, as necessary, to understand the types of disabilities and how to deal with employees and pupils who have disabilities.
- *Ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

*Ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equal opportunities policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure (e.g. complaints relating to staff may be investigated either under the disciplinary, grievance or anti-harassment procedure as appropriate).

*Ensure that all forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously, as such behaviour is unacceptable.

*Ensure that any investigations of allegations of harassment or discrimination will aim to achieve confidentiality for everyone involved.

*Ensure that all employees are obliged to cooperate fully with any investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination.

*Ensure that failing to cooperate or deliberately providing false information during an investigation will be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

The school is committed to the creation of a fair and balanced workplace where employees and pupils are able to express their beliefs, whether philosophical or religious, without impinging on others and in which all employees and pupils demonstrate respect for each other's viewpoints. However, if a member of CAEA's Governance believes that offence has been caused to another employee, pupil, or parent as a result of a view or comment expressed by another employee, the school reserves the right to convene a disciplinary hearing with a view to investigating whether the alleged offence warrants a disciplinary sanction. The school will ensure that its working environment operates within a framework of mutual tolerance and respect. To that end, CAEA reserves the absolute right to decide whether in fact an employee has made an offensive, discriminatory or derogatory remark towards another employee, pupil or parent.

Disability Definitions

A disability is a 'physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities'. (Equality Act)

Further information:

- Physical disability includes medical conditions for which a person needs to use a wheelchair, i.e. cerebral palsy or brittle bones.
- A mental impairment is a recognised mental illness, which has been diagnosed, a severe learning difficulty or psychiatric illness.
- 'Long term' means a period of 12 months or longer.
- An 'adverse effect on day-to-day activity' means a 'significant and material' effect on the following: Mobility; manual dexterity; physical co-ordination; continence; ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects; speech, hearing or eyesight; memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand; and perception of the risk of physical dangers.

Other disabilities, which may amount to disability, include –

- Severe disfigurements, scarring conditions and birthmarks
- Progressive conditions which will result in a substantial long-term adverse effect on day-to-day activity.
- A controlled impairment, i.e. a person with a prosthesis, or a person with a 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 anti-social tendencies such as paedophilia and/or abusive behaviour.
- A person diagnosed as HIV positive, until they exhibit physical symptoms or related conditions.
- 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.

Disability Discrimination

We will not treat a pupil or employee or a prospective pupil or employee less favourably on the grounds of disability *without* justification.

We will not knowingly discriminate against a person on the grounds of disability –

- In the arrangements for determining admission or employment procedures.
- In the terms on which a place at the School is offered.
- By refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or employment.
- In the provision of education and associated services.
- By excluding a person on the ground of their 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.

Policy and planning

Equal opportunities implications, including race equality, will be considered, and recorded whenever school policies are developed or reviewed. All policies will be regularly reviewed to provide a comprehensive and consistent process of monitoring and evaluation.

Employment matters

Appointments: for all staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based on strict professional criteria.

Family-friendly policies: the governance/school is a family-friendly employer and will do its best to respond to the changing needs of all staff by publicising existing schemes designed to support employees in combining work and other responsibilities (parental leave arrangements, job share opportunities, flexitime where appropriate, carers' leave provision).

HIV/AIDS: the governing body/school recognises that people with HIV/AIDS suffer not only from the purely medical effects of the infection but may also experience prejudice and misunderstanding leading to unfair discrimination and victimisation. The governance/school therefore will ensure that people with HIV/AIDS do not experience unfair treatment in relation to employment, as pupils or as other members of the school community. The school and governance will follow the detailed guidelines regarding staff recruitment; see the Safer Recruitment Policy, and pupil admissions (Admissions Policy).

Transsexual employees and gender reassignment: The Sex Discrimination Act now expressly covers discrimination on grounds of gender reassignment.

(The governance/school should consult their local authority's gender reassignment code of practice).

This provides clear guidelines in respect of recruitment and selection and arrangements for existing staff in cases of gender reassignment.]

Training and development

The success of the Equal Opportunities Policy is closely linked to the provision of relevant training.

The school will endeavour to:

- enhance and develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities of existing employees to realise their full potential, irrespective of background or employment status.
- provide equal access to training and development opportunities for all staff, including part time, on the basis of their assessed training needs.
- promote greater awareness of equal opportunities and the contribution which staff, governors, parents/guardians, and pupils can make.

- equip employees with the skills to provide personal and organisational solutions, to recognise discriminatory practices and behaviour, and to promote anti-discriminatory behaviour generally.

Professional development involves a continuous process of learning involving self - development, encouragement, and motivation. The school places great importance on the relationship between the leadership team and the staff will ensure that employees are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own learning and development in the context of the school's performance management system.

Social Events

Employees should be aware that this policy applies to all work-based activities and all events organised by Centre Academy, including but not limited to business or School trips, and social events such as the School Christmas party, whether or not such events take place out of school hours and at a hired venue. Employees' behaviour in other social contexts outside of work may be the legitimate concern of Centre Academy where an employee's behaviour affects the school's business interests or reputation. Staff are discouraged from drinking in pubs/bars with parents.

Pupils and the curriculum

The school follows local authority and/or school admission policies that do not permit sex, race, colour or disability to be used as criteria for admission. The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability, or ethnic origin.

The Education Reform Act 1988 states that 'the school curriculum should reflect the culturally diverse society to which pupils belong and of which they will become adult members.' Pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. Equality of opportunity should inform the whole of the curriculum and be reviewed regularly. Equal opportunities issues will be taken account of in planning the curriculum. This should be reflected in curriculum planning documentation.

Entry Procedures

The school will be open to applications from any prospective pupil with a physical and/or mental impairment. However, access is somewhat limited in the main house, which is a listed building.

Education and Associated Services

The School has an on-going 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.

Reasonable Adjustments for Pupils

The School is legally required to make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to cater for a child's disability. These may include,

- Rearranging the timetable to allow a pupil to attend classes in an accessible part of the building
- Arranging for work papers in larger print for a child with a visual impairment
- Arranging a variety of accessible sports and activities
- Arranging for a placement in an accessible dormitory with toilet and bathroom facilities
- Making adjustments to the signage around the school
- Making access to buildings easier

When assessing what reasonable adjustments should be taken the following factors must be considered

- The effectiveness of the steps taken in overcoming the difficulty that a disabled person faces
- The extent to which it is practicable to make changes
- Financial and other costs of making the adjustments
- The amount of disruption caused by taking the steps
- The money already spent on making adjustments
- The availability of financial or other assistance

Internal managerial issues

These guidelines are primarily designed to address employment aspects of the governance and management. However, in consulting on the policy and developing it further head teachers and members of the senior management group will wish to take a range of other internal issues into account. Many of the issues listed will already be the subject of detailed agreed policies. All existing policies are 'audited' from an equal opportunities perspective.

Part Two: Monitoring, review and evaluation

1. The Governance have a duty to ensure that policies are regularly monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring is an essential aspect of this policy, as it should provide important information by which the school can measure its performance against its aims and objectives. Statistical information can also enable the governance and the head teacher to detect where potential or actual imbalances exist and to take steps to correct them.

2. Monitoring with respect to employment will be undertaken in the following areas on at least an annual basis by sex, race, disability, and subject area:

- * Composition of the school staff.
- * Recruitment trends.
- * Take up of training opportunities.
- * Promotion patterns.
- * Use of complaints procedure.
- * Use of grievance, disciplinary, harassment etc.
- * Use of sanctions.
- * Take-up of family-friendly policies, e.g., flexible working arrangements.

3. Exit interviews can also provide further helpful information and feedback.

4. The Governance should ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

Appendix A: Discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, or sexual orientation is illegal. However, for the school community, discrimination is also unacceptable on any of the other grounds referred to in this policy statement. Failure to comply with the policy will be fully and promptly investigated using the appropriate procedures.

There are four ways in which discrimination may occur:

1. **Direct discrimination:** This means treating someone less favourably than others in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex etc.
2. **Indirect discrimination:** This means applying a requirement or condition which cannot be justified to all groups, but which has a disproportionately adverse effect on one group because the proportion of that group which can comply is smaller than the proportion of the group(s) which can comply with it.
3. **Victimisation:** This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other persons would be treated because that person has done a 'protected act' under the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Race Relations Act or Employment Equality Regulations, for example, by bringing forward proceedings or giving evidence or information.

4. **Harassment:** Harassment can take many forms, from the most obvious abusive remarks to extremely subtle use of power. As with unfair or unlawful discrimination, harassment can be intentional or unintentional. However, the key issue is not simply the intention of the offender but the impact of the behaviour on the person receiving it.

Harassment may involve any of the following:

- * Physical contact or violence.
- * Offensive humiliating and intimidating remarks or actions.
- * Exclusion from participation in job-related or classroom-related discussions, training or social or other events.
- * Unfair work allocation.
- * Unjust or excessive or humiliating criticism of performance.
- * Offensive signs or notices.
- * Graffiti.
- * Repeated demands or requests for sexual favours.

These are merely examples and not an exhaustive list. Whatever the form, the school will provide support for any member of the school community, pupil or staff member who feels threatened or isolated because of such actions.

The governance and school will:

- ensure that job applicants who are deemed to be medically fit to perform the job for which they have applied are not denied an offer of work solely because they are HIV positive. In arriving at the decision, the school's normal recruitment criteria will be observed including the normal medical procedures;
- ensure, where possible, that resources are available to support employees or pupils with AIDS or other major health problems associated with HIV infection. The school's normal rules and procedures regarding ill health will apply in such cases. Equally the school will make appropriate arrangements for the provision of counselling (i.e. by referral to external agencies);
- give positive consideration to applications for unpaid leave for those with responsibility for caring for people with AIDS-related conditions in accordance with carers' leave arrangements.
- treat any breaches of confidentiality as a serious matter to be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary (or other appropriate) procedure.
- provide appropriate training in relation to AIDS in order to combat fears and prejudice and to enable the school community as a whole to function without risk to health.

Appendix B: Accessibility Plans

Physical Access:

Main House

The house has two doors, one to the front and one at the side, through which a wheelchair is accessible. A ramp has been made for the door at the front of the School.

The Dining Room is accessible by a wheelchair.

The rooms on the second floor are not accessible and there is no space for a lift to be installed.

Coach House

The ground floor of the Coach House is accessible to a wheelchair via the front door, which has a ramp and wide access. There is an accessible bathroom consisting of a wet area and a toilet.

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The library is accessible by wheelchair, but the upstairs rooms would not be accessible and there is no space for a lift to be installed.

Portakabins and Art Room

The paths to these rooms are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair and ramps have been installed for wheelchair access into individual portakabins. The Art Room has a double door and has been fitted with a ramp making it accessible.

Playing Field

The field could be accessed by a wheelchair user.

Signage

New signs have been erected throughout the grounds and buildings.

Conclusions

Students can be taught in the Art Room and Portakabins. Timetabling arrangements could be made to ensure that other subjects were taught in the rooms mentioned above.

The inability to access the Hall in the Main House would have implications for some activities (presentations/talks by outside speakers), however, all events requiring space are undertaken in the Hall. This is the only room large enough to accommodate the whole school.

The proprietors are committed to constantly improving the buildings within the limitations of the grade II listing.

Curriculum:

As any child admitted to the School will have a range of SEN, access to the curriculum should not be a problem. Clearly adjustments would have to be made for a child who has visual problems requiring larger print or for those with hearing problems but basic changes in the curriculum would not be necessary.

The school has a Speech & Language and Occupational Therapist. Advice from them would therefore be sought and arrangements made to support a child's needs. Many of our pupils presently have significant Speech & Language difficulties.

Many pupils also have poor motor control and are supported within the classroom and via group activities during games.

Much of the work undertaken here is planned and presented on an individual basis enabling adjustments to be made more readily than in a mainstream environment.

All staff have been alerted to the need to consider the delivery of information to disabled pupils and how they will need to adjust their teaching if it becomes necessary.

Barriers to Access in planning:

It is important to consider the following areas in all planning:

1. Do you have training for the pupil concerned and if not do you know where to look for it?
2. Is your classroom organised for a disabled pupil?
3. Are your lessons responsive to pupil diversity?
4. Are all pupils encouraged to take part in the full curriculum?
5. Are there high expectations of all pupils?
6. Do you seek to remove barriers to learning and participation?

School Sports:

As stated above the School field is accessible for games. The level of involvement would depend on the type of disability involved in a particular case.

Breaks and lunchtimes:

When weather allows break is held outside and access is possible. On wet days break is in the Hall making it necessary to arrange separate accommodation in the library for a disabled person. This could be achieved easily. As discussed above mealtimes are not a problem.

Assessment and examination arrangements:

All pupils taking entry exams to other schools receive extra time for their papers and such arrangements could easily be made for a disabled candidate. Internal assessments are undertaken on an individual or small group basis, which again makes it possible to adapt and meet special requirements.

School discipline and sanctions:

The sanctions used in the School can be adapted for any child. (See Behaviour Policy for details). Some sanctions, being sent on a run for example, would not be applicable but alternatives can and are found to suit the individual involved.

Exclusion Procedures:

Procedures would apply equally to all pupils entering the school. (See Behaviour Policy for details)

Activities, Trips:

The fact that the field is accessible by a wheelchair user makes some activities and games possible. The degree of usage would depend on the nature of the particular difficulties a pupil presents with and the amount of support they would need. Transport to other activities outside the School grounds would be difficult, as the mini-buses do not have wheelchair access or space. The same problem would apply to School trips but could be overcome by using parental transport.

Delivery of Material in Other Formats

Although the school does not have current need for alternative formats, these will be purchased on an 'as and when' basis. If a child presents for enrolment and they need equipment to support their disability, the school undertakes to purchase this.

Centre Academy East Anglia would expect to apply the principles of disability access to all pupils, all staff and all work experience students.

Appendix C: **Disability Equality Action for Exams**

Type of Disability or Disadvantage	Centre Solution
Wheelchair user	The main exam rooms can be moved to the ground floor
Use of crutches for broken leg or other lower limb complaint	The main exam rooms can be moved to the ground floor
Broken arm/collar bone/finger or other such complaint	The centre will arrange for candidates to have a scribe, laptop and/or extra time for the exam
Generally feeling unwell	The centre may be able to arrange for the candidate to sit the exam in a room on their own (invigilation staff permitting) and candidates will be allowed rest breaks of up to 10 minutes at a time without penalty to the overall exam duration
Visual disability	All exam rooms in the centre are well lighted. Candidates are permitted the use of their coloured film overlays as required
Hearing disability	Candidates may have the use of a live speaker for pre-recorded exam components, or a sign language interpreter. Candidates will be accommodated in a room on their own
Long term illness or disability	Candidates with long term illness or a disability that makes travel to the centre difficult may be allowed to sit their exams at home with permission from the individual Exam Boards.
Learning disabilities	Candidates within the centre are assessed and permitted the use of a Scribe, Reader and/or Extra Time as recommended by the centre's SENCo.