



DURANTS SCHOOL – POLICY DOCUMENT

Accessibility Policy and Plan

April 2023

Reviewed & updated: April 2023 (Rachel Carli)

Next review date: April 2024

Introduction

Durants School treats all stakeholders, including pupils, staff, Governors and other members of the school community equally and with respect. Durants school ensures all

People, including: pupils, staff and visitors have full access to an accessible environment regardless of their abilities and disabilities

This policy should be read alongside the Equality Act 2010.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is designed to protect individuals from discrimination.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all existing equality legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act. Under the Equality Act there is a requirement for public sector bodies, including schools, to promote equality for disabled people in every aspect of their work. Schools will need to take an organisational approach to formulating policy and practices, which positively promote disability.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (sometimes also referred to as the 'general duty') that applies to public bodies, including maintained schools and Academies, and which extends to all protected characteristics – **race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment**.

Aim of this policy

This policy aims to comply with this combined equality duty which came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

DURANTS SCHOOL VISION

Durants promotes a holistic environment for young people with autism and their families. Durants offers a person-centred curriculum that enables all students supported by their families to achieve and forge their own path into society and adulthood.

Preparing for independent living

Actively promoting good health

Teaching skills for employment

Helping to develop friendships, relationships and participate in the community.

Values and Principles

Independent Living

- For all students to do as much for themselves as possible
- To provide routines, structures and communication strategies that support students to be independent
- To support all students to be safe

Friendships, Relationships and Community

- For all students to have regular access to the community and to learn to be able to be safe
- Students to be supported to develop friendships and relationships that suit them as an individual
- To support students to understand social rules and behaviour
- All students to have access to appropriate and necessary health care

Good Health

- Having a healthy diet and regular exercise
- Access to services that promote emotional well-being and good mental health

Employment

- To develop individual skills that will be useful in the workplace
- To provide sheltered work placements in school that meet the needs of learners with autism
- To develop and foster relationships with suitable external employers

To achieve our vision we aim to:

Create a happy and secure learning environment where all pupils' needs are met and where achievements and success are recognised and praised.

Ensure that all the National Curriculum/statutory curriculum guidance is delivered to all pupils.

Ensure that ICT is an essential vehicle to access and enhance the curriculum and communication for pupils.

Ensure that safeguarding is paramount in keeping all members of the school community safe.

Provide all staff with training and development opportunities to enable effective practice.

Promote the pupils spiritual, physical and emotional well-being so that they are secure, confident and well-motivated.

Help pupils acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence which will enable them to lead a full, interesting and independent life, where possible.

Develop in pupils' personal responsibility as well as encouraging decision making and choice, communicating through whatever means appropriate.

Provide a wide range of age-appropriate learning experiences, which are both exciting and challenging.

Offer opportunities of working co-operatively alongside others, developing friendships and respect for others

Provide pupils/students with experiences of their own and other religious and cultural backgrounds and values. Foster relationships with parents and other professionals.

Implementation

We have compiled an evidence table of how we already comply with the equality here at Durants.

	How do Durants School eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and further peoples knowledge and understanding of differences
Race	<p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Termly reports on racial incidents (none to date)</p> <p>Exploring race within the curriculum</p> <p>Diverse assemblies</p> <p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Multicultural displays around school</p> <p>Multicultural celebration events held at school e.g. Black History Month</p> <p>Multicultural celebration throughout the curriculum and in class lessons e.g. food tasting sessions from different cultures around the world</p> <p>Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils</p> <p>Standard admissions process for all pupils in place</p> <p>Standard recruitment process for all staff in place</p>
Disability	<p>School policies all-inclusive of disability particularly Autism due to Durants being an Autism specific school</p> <p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Good links with parents and carers</p> <p>Good links with multiagency professionals</p> <p>Termly Multiagency meetings</p> <p>Diverse assemblies</p> <p>Assessment data and tracking progress</p> <p>Pupil target setting and reviewing</p> <p>Specialist resources and aids purchased</p> <p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Pupils participating in internal and external competitions, workshops etc</p> <p>Siblings group</p> <p>In house therapy team to aid meeting the needs of our pupils</p> <p>Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils</p> <p>Standard admissions process for all pupils in place</p> <p>Standard recruitment process for all staff in place</p> <p>Experienced staff who are all given the same training opportunities including Autism training, approach</p> <p>Accessible environment with signage, symbols, accessible parking, acoustic panelling.</p>

Sex (Gender)	<p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Standard admissions process for all pupils in place</p> <p>Standard recruitment process for all staff in place</p>
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	Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils
Age	<p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Standard admissions process for all pupils in place</p> <p>Standard recruitment process for Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils r all staff in place</p>
Religion and beliefs	<p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Diverse assemblies</p> <p>Exploring religion within the curriculum</p> <p>Multi-faith displays around school</p> <p>Multi-faith celebrations i.e. visiting a temple, annual church service</p> <p>Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>Non-discriminatory job descriptions/roles/expectations for staff, volunteers, students, governors, and visitors.</p> <p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Communication technology, books and symbols in place for pupils</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Following the Equality policy</p> <p>Following the policy in place for expectant mothers</p> <p>Risk assessments in place with reasonable adjustments</p> <p>Regular review meetings</p> <p>Areas for rest/breastfeeding available</p> <p>Information sharing (where appropriate)</p> <p>Paternity leave</p> <p>Open door policy</p>
Gender reassignment	

The Accessibility Plan

Durants school is passionate about promoting equality and accessibility throughout the school, curriculum and wider community. Being a specialist Autism provision it is natural that our passion lies within the autistic community. To further develop equal opportunities Durants are part of Enfield Council's wider plan of future proofing educational placements for all autistic learners in Enfield.

This is currently how the plan looks.

Enfield Council has worked together with Durants School to develop a specialist educational facility for children with autism, after acquiring the site at Minchenden from Barnet and Southgate College and approving an £11m budget for the project.

The northern section of the Minchenden site has been redeveloped to have modern facilities for secondary school pupils with complex needs of students who began studying at the school in September.

The new school provides places for 120 pupils for Year 9 to 11, and post-16 pupils (aged 14 to 19), expanding specialist autism provision across secondary provision in Enfield. This addresses an acute need within the borough.

The construction works comprised refurbishment and modification of existing buildings on site to provide modern, flexible, fit for purpose education facilities. The Farbey Building has been refurbished and re-modelled for school accommodation, including a small extension. The Mews Building has been reconfigured and refurbished to provide an art room and food technology facilities to help prepare pupils for living on their own. An open sided workshop was re-modelled to provide a fully equipped production kitchen with associated spaces, dining hall plus additional dining areas for small groups.

Vehicular access and egress on the site were improved by providing a one-way system for all vehicles on to the site. Access to the school is via the High Street into the newly designed car park; vehicles then egress the site through the adjacent Leigh Hunt Drive car park. The school was provided with 37 car parking spaces within the contained car park and space for minibuses. Included in this area is a covered bicycle store.

External play spaces were developed specifically for the needs of autistic pupils. The spaces include an outdoor gym, individually contained trampolines, swings and large play equipment plus multiple seating areas.

Enfield Council are committed to supporting the needs of all our young people and believe that the new school provides an opportunity to ensure that they have access to an outstanding learning environment at the most appropriate location for their needs.

ABOUT DURANTS SCHOOL

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What is happening to Durants School at Pitfield Way?

Durants school Pitfield Way is being refurbished this will be completed by July 2020. In July we anticipate transitioning new year 7 pupils into the building. There will be 5 classes of year 7 pupils starting in Pitfield Way in September. We have monthly progress meetings every third Tuesday of the month where the team discuss progress.

Joint statement Durants & Winchmore regarding 6th Form provision

Background

Winchmore is a successful, mixed, multicultural maintained secondary school situated on a very pleasant green site in Winchmore Hill in the London Borough of Enfield with 1650 students, of which 450 students are in the Sixth Form. In 2015/16 the sixth form intake increased significantly to necessitate a sixth form annex on Broomfield School site to accommodate the expansion.

Durants School is a maintained special school that caters for 127 pupils from the age range of 11-19. It is a secondary autism specific provision in the Borough of Enfield based on a new site in Southgate, North London, providing a state of the art autism provision with facilities such as a rebound therapy room, sensory integration room, life skills and creative art rooms.

In 2013 both schools set up a partnership for students who would benefit from a specialist autism provision in a mainstream environment at Winchmore School. The partnership proved so successful in 2016 a second Additional Resource Provision (ARP) unit was set up within the school to accommodate the increasing demand.

The joint sixth form provision addresses the growing needs of students at both Winchmore and Durants schools.

There is a borough-wide agenda for transforming care and access to the community for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The joint provision will provide a niche facility that addresses the needs of high functioning students with ASD who are unable to access a traditional mainstream environment. The ARP is a unique provision and a demand for places is explicit. Currently, the ARP is held as a beacon of good practice across the borough and beyond, maintaining a reputation for excellence.

Purpose

Both schools are oversubscribed and require additional facilities to expand their provision and improve their delivery to all stakeholders.

The number of applications to the sixth form has increased in recent years and Winchmore have over 400 applications from students wanting to join in year 12. We are now offering over 35 different types of courses and require additional facilities to accommodate these courses and students.

Winchmore School currently occupies an annex on Broomfield School site consisting of eight classrooms, a large common room with outside space and offices. Three classrooms have been converted to specialist IT rooms to facilitate popular vocational courses. However, with no direct transport links to cover the three mile distance, students and staff are travelling by car, taking two buses or walking to access the centre. Our timetable has been planned to accommodate staff and students studying at the annex for a whole day where this has been possible.

Broomfield School's pupil intake has now increased to such a level that they will require the space the annex provides for the teaching of their own students.

Durants ARP has been established within Winchmore school for the last 7 years. In its inception it consisted of one class which has now expanded to two to ensure a clear progression from KS3 to KS4. Students currently have no provision for further education appropriate to them which causes distress and disruption to students and families.

Aims

Both schools maintain a close bond cemented in inclusivity for all.

Durants

- To provide opportunities at post-16 for students with Autism.
- Reduce the need for students with high-functioning autism to access out-of-borough provision
- Increase awareness of ASD within the mainstream community and further community

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- Reduce the variation in student progress in relation to mainstream peers

Winchmore

- To consolidate the teaching and learning of all Sixth Form students on one site
- To eradicate lost teaching time staff and students spend travelling in between sites
- Allow more students to remain into year 14. This is an option for those who require additional time to complete their courses.
- Increase the curriculum offer in the sixth form
- To return the annex facility back to Broomfield School for the benefit of their increasing students on roll.

Implementation

The most effective aspect of the provision is the high level of opportunity for integration. Both schools work seamlessly to ensure all students are given opportunities to integrate students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) into mainstream education where practicable. This further expands opportunities for students to undertake nationally recognised qualifications in a variety of subjects at a range of appropriate levels.

By having a SEND provision in a mainstream setting, the culture and mind-set of the school has developed through integration, personal and social education programmes and raising awareness of SEND. All staff have now received autism awareness training to fully enable participation of those with ASD across the school. Performance data indicates the ARP provision is effective in producing sustained progress for all students from their individual starting points.

Winchmore School has a very large, thriving sixth form with between 450 and 500 students offered places every year, and significantly more students applying than there are places available. Over 90% of Winchmore students remain in the sixth form with a significant number joining from within Enfield, and neighbouring Boroughs. The opportunity to raise awareness about ASD, and to give opportunities for students to engage as fully as possible with a mainstream environment in a supportive environment with specialist facilities and staff (including therapists) will be of significant benefit socially, emotionally and academically to the wider school community.

Impact

The addition of a post-16 provision for Durants' students with ASD will have an enormous impact in all areas of development. Students will be able to access a bespoke provision where they are able to flourish through integration and interaction with neurotypical peers. The facilities will enable students to engage in a state-of-the-art learning environment where they can feel valued, respected and realise their potential.

The inclusion of therapeutic rooms will make a tremendous impact on not only those with ASD, but the wider school community as a whole. Mental health needs is a high priority on the agenda for both the DFE and NHS. Having facilities to address these in a safe, secure way ensures we can get the best from all.

Benefits for Winchmore's students include:

- State of the art facilities for staff and students will lead to better engagement and outcomes
- The new build will allow us to increase our curriculum offer as we will be in a position to recruit additional specialist staff as our intake increases.
- Positive impact on progress for students underachieving. We are currently unable to offer study support and mentoring to students who are at Broomfield due to staffing.
- Students will receive full pastoral support as they will be able to attend all form time sessions and assemblies.
- Dedicate social and study areas so students can receive the support they need.

- Improve mental wellbeing for students as the stress of travel and lost learning time is alleviated.

Attractive shared social space and 6F Café will improve wellbeing for all students where social interaction and inclusion will be the norm.

School funding is a critical concern in the current climate with schools operating with limited resources. The development of a new 6th form building will provide value for money by consolidating timetables to maximise teaching periods available without the loss of staff availability on site. The integration of curriculum and financial planning will maximise resources.

The impact on staff will result in high quality teaching and learning as a direct result of state-of-the-art facilities, teaching resources, reducing the need for travel (and the associated lost planning and preparation time), impacting positively on workload and stress levels. The ability to increase the number of programmes of study on offer will increase opportunities for professional development.

Summary

The proposed build will allow us to offer a high quality, inclusive, broad and balanced curriculum to an increasing number of students, targeting students not just within our local authority but beyond. With the increasing need to support young children with their mental well-being we need to be in a position where we can be assured they are receiving that support through our pastoral program.

With the very good performance of students in the Sixth Form at Winchmore School, and our approach in which students often remain with us into year 14 and sometimes 15, taking examinations when they are ready to do so, there has been a sustained rise in the numbers of students applying to study at the school, this has included over 300 external applications every year, a significant number of whom apply from other Local Authorities. Whilst standards are well above average for academic courses of study, the standards reached by students who are in year 14 and 15 are not included in performance measures, and lead to increased life chances for young people, the majority of whom go on to good university places; conversations with parents and young people indicate that this approach is very significant in driving the large number of applications. The proposed new building project would enable Winchmore School to offer this opportunity to an increased number of students whilst developing opportunities for increased inclusion of students with ASD, and a more integrated school community leading to greater awareness of adults and students.