



## DISABILITY POLICY

The Disability Discrimination Policy is a statement of the aims and principles of Thomas's London Day Schools to ensure that people with a disability flourish at school.

### DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The Disability Discrimination Act, passed in July 1995, was amended in September 2002, and again in 2005 to incorporate schools and The Equality Act 2010. The Act states:

A person with a disability is:

“one who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”

An “impairment” has a long term effect if it has lasted or is expected to last for at least 12 months or for the rest of the life of the person concerned.

“Substantial” is neither minor nor trivial.

It will be unlawful for a Responsible Body to discriminate against pupils with a disability. Discrimination can take place in two ways:

Treating a pupil “less favourably” than others for a reason relating directly to their disability.

Failing to make a “reasonable adjustment” to ensure they are not placed at a “substantial disadvantage” for a reason relating to their disability.

## DISABILITY POLICY

<b>School:</b>	<b>Thomas's, Battersea</b> 28-40 Battersea High Street London, SW11 3JB	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7978 0900	<b>Facsimile:</b> 020 7978 0901
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:battersea@thomas-s.co.uk">battersea@thomas-s.co.uk</a>	
<b>Head of School:</b>	Mr Simon O'Malley	
<b>SENDCO:</b>	Mrs Anne Sheppe [Head of Learning Support - Middle & Upper School] Mrs Catherine Hare [Head of Learning Support - Lower School]	
<b>School:</b>	<b>Thomas's, Clapham</b> Broomwood Road London, SW11 6JZ	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7326 9300	<b>Facsimile:</b> 020 7326 9301
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:clapham@thomas-s.co.uk">clapham@thomas-s.co.uk</a>	
<b>Head of School:</b>	Mr Philip Ward	
<b>SENDCO:</b>	Mrs Kathryn Mousa [Learning Enrichment Leader]	
<b>School:</b>	<b>Thomas's, Fulham</b> Hugon Road London, SW6 3ES	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7751 8200	<b>Facsimile:</b> 020 7751 8201
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:fulham@thomas-s.co.uk">fulham@thomas-s.co.uk</a>	
<b>Head of School:</b>	Miss Annette Dobson	
<b>SENDCO:</b>	Mrs Sarah Wild [Head of Learning Support and Enrichment]	
<b>School:</b>	<b>Thomas's, Kensington</b> 17-19 Cottesmore Gardens London, W8 5PR	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7361 6500	<b>Facsimile:</b> 020 7361 6501
	39/41 Victoria Road London, W8 5RJ	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7937 0583	<b>Facsimile:</b> 020 7376 0515
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:kensington@thomas-s.co.uk">kensington@thomas-s.co.uk</a>	
<b>Head of School:</b>	Miss Joanna Ebner	
<b>SENDCO:</b>	Mrs Ruth Mann / Mrs Julia Morley [SENCO - Joint Heads of Learning Support]	
<b>School:</b>	<b>Thomas's Kindergarten, Battersea</b> St Mary's Church Battersea Church Road London SW11 3NA	
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	020 7738 0400	
<b>Head of School:</b>	Miss Katharyn Ballantine	
<b>SENDCO:</b>	Mrs Maureen Desmond	

**Principals:** N.T.L. Thomas, B.V.R. Thomas, Mr and Mrs D.L. Thomas

The Principals will be viewed as the "Responsible Body" for implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Equality Act 2010.

## **1. AIMS OF THE SCHOOL**

Thomas's London Day Schools seeks to encourage a diverse community to which individuals may contribute as fully as possible. It aims to create conditions whereby staff and pupils are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential by ensuring that no member of the School is unfairly discriminated against as a result of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, age, social background, disability, religion or belief, family circumstances or sexual orientation.

To this end, Thomas's London Day Schools will:

- Fulfil its legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010 and any related or subsequent legislation.
- Seek to identify and remove all unjustified direct, indirect, associative and perceived discrimination against people with a disability/learning difficulty.
- Pursue a consistent programme of development and improvement in facilities, in processes and in the skills, knowledge and understanding of staff to meet the needs of people with disability/learning difficulty, wherever reasonably possible.
- Liaise with national organisations and local support services to ensure that a range of options, resources and facilities are identified for the benefit of individuals.

In Addition:

- Admissions from potential pupils or applications for employment are assessed subject to the admissions process and on the basis of the applicant's aptitudes, abilities and qualifications. We will do all that is reasonable to ensure that, with appropriate adjustments, the needs of disabled potential employees or pupils are catered for and that they are not disadvantaged in the admissions process.
- Disabled staff and pupils have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Schools.
- The views of the individual pupil or member of staff are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- Members of staff working with disabled people, either as colleagues or pupils, have appropriate information and support.
- The Schools will take steps to enable staff and pupils who become disabled during their time at the School to continue in their chosen career or school career, wherever possible.
- The Schools will endeavour to accommodate disabled visitors, wherever possible, to enable them to participate in events held on school premises.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Schools expect all staff to be aware of this policy and its related Code of Practice to treat disabled people, whether pupils, staff or visitors, fairly with respect and in accordance with this policy.

## **2. DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE**

### **CODE OF PRACTICE RELATING TO PUPILS**

#### **2.1 ADMISSIONS**

- All parents of pupils who are being called for interview should be asked if they require any assistance to enable them or their child to access the buildings and/or to participate

- fully in the interview and assessment, for instance the provision of information or tests in an alternative format.
- Applications from all pupils will be assessed on the basis of academic suitability and the degree to which the school can adequately cater for their needs. Discussions about the support requirements of pupils will be separate from that consideration.
  - The Schools will make available clear information about access to buildings and support facilities to enable the parents of disabled pupils to make an informed choice of School.
  - The Schools will identify a designated member of staff with whom the parents of disabled pupils may discuss the curriculum, the teaching and the learning activities entailed, to ensure that any learning support and other needs are clearly identified. Designated members of staff will receive appropriate training.
  - No pupil will be refused a place at the Schools on the grounds of disability alone before an opportunity has been provided for full consideration of the specific support or facilities required, in consultation with the Head of School, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and others whose expertise may be required for the specific situation.
  - If a pupil is rejected on grounds other than academic considerations, a record of the decision and the reasons for it will be kept for one year. When requested, the School will give feedback to the pupil's parents.

## 2.2 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

- The Schools will take appropriate steps to ensure that lessons are organised in ways, which offer the best possible opportunities for full participation by disabled pupils.
- The Schools will identify designated members of staff with whom disabled pupils and their parents may discuss the specific requirements of their intended curriculum, in advance, to ensure that learning support and other needs are identified and made known to relevant staff. This mechanism will also be used to enable pupils and their parents to discuss any emerging needs and identify appropriate possible courses of action to address those needs. Designated members of staff will receive appropriate training.
- Appropriate modes of examination and assessment will be determined after consultation with the pupil and their parents, relevant academic staff, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and others, as necessary, to enable pupils to demonstrate that they have met the criteria for progression or the conferment of an award. The purpose of any special arrangements shall be to compensate for any restriction imposed by the disability without compromising academic standards.
- Any request for special arrangements, in relation to examination and assessment procedures, must be supported by medical or other evidence and it is the pupils and their parents' responsibility to make that available to the Schools.
- The Schools will take all appropriate steps to ensure that a pupil who becomes disabled during their career at the School has every opportunity to remain at the school through the provision of the same level of adaptation and support as a comparable pupil who is disabled at the start of their school career.
- The Schools will aim to ensure that disabled pupils have equal access to all pupil facilities. While it is recognised that some of these facilities are located in buildings, which have access problems, the Schools will ensure that the facility can be provided in such a way that the needs of the disabled pupil are met. Examples of this would be

assistance in the library to obtain books, provision of information in Braille or large print, special keyboards and software programmes.

### 2.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- The School will ensure that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and all other Health and Safety issues within the Schools that affect them.

## 3. DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE

### CODE OF PRACTICE ON EMPLOYMENT

3.1 The Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act makes it unlawful for the Schools, and therefore, any of its employees to discriminate in the field of employment, against a disabled person for a reason that relates to the persons disability, if that treatment cannot be justified. This applies not only to requirements, but to all areas of employment including the terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies. This Code of Practice aims to ensure that the Schools act within the law.

Wherever practicable, the Schools will:

- Seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Seek to ensure that disabled employees are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
- Ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed term contracts is being considered.

### 3.2 RECRUITMENT

- Application and selection procedures used in the recruitment and selection of staff should encourage disabled people. All applicants should be asked when being called for interview if they require any assistance to enable them to participate fully in the interview, for example an accessible interview venue, a signer or the provision of information in an alternative format.
- All candidates will be assessed on their abilities, qualifications and experience according to the objective criteria developed for the post. It may be that a "reasonable adjustment" would be required to allow a disabled candidate to meet the criteria but it should be assumed, in deciding whether the individual meets the criteria, that the appropriate adjustment had been made. For example, no candidate will be rejected simply on the basis that they cannot gain access to the building and detailed discussions should take place with the Head of School before any decision is made. Most arrangements to accommodate disabled employees can be made within existing resource constraints or at minimal cost. It should, therefore, not be assumed that employing disabled people will cause problems or generate significant additional cost.

### 3.3 SUPPORT IN EMPLOYMENT

Some disabled people may require additional support when settling into their working environment. Heads of Department and colleagues should ensure that particular needs are discussed with the individual concerned. In particular, consideration should be given to any adaptation e.g. provision of equipment, modification to the working environment or to the organisation of the post, which may be necessary to enable the individual to work on equal terms with non-disabled colleagues. Any necessary modifications should ideally be agreed and carried out before the individual commences work. Some of the adjustments may have implications for other staff and it is important that they are consulted about proposed changes. Consideration should also be given to parking facilities, toilet facilities and health and safety issues such as fire alarms and procedures.

### 3.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

Where the disability is not obvious, the individual should be asked if they wish their colleagues to be informed of their disability and Heads of Department should respect their wishes in this regard. In certain cases, it may be appropriate for some colleagues to be aware of the condition in order to be able to respond appropriately in cases of emergency.

### 3.5 TRAINING

Training should be made available to disabled people on the same basis as their colleagues. Where special arrangements are required, for example, accessible training accommodation or braille handouts, this should be put in place.

### 3.6 MEMBERS OF STAFF WHO BECOME DISABLED

Losing the services of a member of staff who becomes disabled can deprive the Schools of a considerable asset in terms of the skills and experience of the individual as well as an investment in that individual's training and development. Where practicable the Schools will attempt to retain staff who become disabled and to ensure suitable employment for them. Senior members of staff should deal as sensitively as possible with these situations and seek help where required. Help should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status, financial loss and reduced self-esteem.

The Schools are required by law to make reasonable adjustments to enable the individual to continue in post.

There are a number of possible options to consider:

- **Continuing in the same post** - Where the disability has occurred as the result of an accident, for example, the individual has been absent from work for some time, the Schools should be flexible and sensitive in assisting staff to return to work. In circumstances where it is envisaged that some difficulties may be encountered the Schools should consider a gradual return to work or a permanent reduction in hours until confidence and ability are fully restored, or a trial period of up to twelve weeks can be used to try to assess whether the member of staff can cope with the old job or a new one.

- **Re-deployment** – Where it is not practicable for the individual to continue in their former post, the Schools should attempt to re-deploy the individual into a suitable alternative post. The individual’s qualifications and skills as well as their own preferences in terms of type of work should be taken into account when trying to identify a suitable vacancy.
- If a suitable vacancy cannot be found within the School, there may be a suitable vacancy at another Thomas’s School. This would be subject to a trial period to see how they coped and the Schools will do everything possible to support the individual. At the end of the trial period a formal review should be held to determine whether the individual should be confirmed in the post. Substantive grounds would be required if it is considered that the individual is not suitable.

In both of the options outlined above, individuals have recourse to the Grievance Procedure if they are not satisfied that they have been treated fairly.

- **Premature retirement on grounds of incapacity** – Where it has been decided that redeployment is impracticable, the member of staff may be considered for retirement on the grounds of medical incapacity under the normal terms of the appropriate procedure.
- **Termination of employment** – If all other options have been explored and found to be impracticable, dismissal on grounds of incapacity should be considered. If it proves to be necessary, termination will be in accordance with the appropriate procedures, which include a right of appeal.

In some cases, the disability will be a progressive condition, which develops over time and a number of the options will be appropriate at different stages. For example, the individual will probably be able to continue for some time in their existing post, with or without appropriate adjustments, before any of the other options require to be considered.

#### 4. VISITORS

The Schools are used for School events and Foundation events, by visitors and members of the public. The Schools will aim to ensure that all buildings intended for use by these groups are accessible. Provision of information will also be required for emergency and evacuation procedures.

#### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES

All School staff are expected to be aware of this policy and treat disabled people, whether pupils, staff, visitors, members of the public in accordance with these provisions. In particular, Heads of Department will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is communicated effectively and is being implemented in their areas of control.

Please also refer to the Schools Equality Policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually.			
Created: December 2007	By:	Margaret Tuck, Director of Administration	
Reviewed: March 2019	BY:	Christine Tuck, Head of HR	Changes Made
Next Review: March 2020	BY:	Christine Tuck, Head of HR	

## Appendix 1

### A SUMMARY OF THE SEN AND DISABILITY ACT 2001

This act makes amendments to The Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).  
Sections of the Code and Sections of the DDA.

#### SECTION 11: SECTION 28A DDA

Discrimination against pupils with a disability and prospective pupils

It is unlawful for the Responsible Body to discriminate against a person with a disability.

- a) in the arrangements it makes for determining admissions
- b) in the terms on which it offers to admit such a pupil
- c) by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission.

It is unlawful for the Responsible Body to discriminate in the education or associated services provided for such pupils.

It is unlawful for the Responsible Body to discriminate by excluding whether permanently or temporarily.

#### SECTION 12: SECTION 28B DDA

##### The Meaning of Discrimination

A Responsible Body discriminates if:

- a) for a reason related to the disability, the pupil is treated less favourably
- b) such a treatment cannot be justified

A Responsible Body discriminates if:

- a) it fails to comply with Section 28C to make reasonable adjustments
- b) such a failure cannot be justified

In failing to make reasonable adjustments a Responsible Body does not discriminate if it shows:

- a) it did not know/could not have been reasonably expected to know of the disability
- b) failure to act was attributed to the lack of knowledge

Taking a particular action does not amount to less favourable treatment if at the time the Responsible Body did not know/could not have known about the disability.

Less favourable treatment is justified if it is the result of a permitted form of selection.

Less favourable treatment or failure to comply with Section 28C is justified only if the reason for it is both material to the circumstances of the particular case and substantial.

## **SECTION 13: SECTION 28C DDA**

### **Pupils with a disability should not be substantially disadvantaged**

The Responsible Body must take steps as it is reasonable to ensure that:

- a) in determining admission arrangements pupils with a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- b) in the education and associated services that it provides, pupils with a disability are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

This does not require the Responsible Body to:

- a) remove or alter a physical feature (through the Access Plan)
- b) provide auxiliary aids or services (through SEN legislation)

When considering what reasonable steps to take it must have regard to the DDA Code of Practice.

The Responsible Body must consider whether the action to be taken in complying with its duty to take reasonable steps is compatible with its compliance with a request for confidentiality.

Confidentiality Request means a request that the nature or existence of a disability is treated as confidential and has been:

- a) made by the pupil's parents.
- b) made by the pupil and the Responsible Body reasonably believes that the pupil understands the nature of the requests and its consequences.

## **SECTION 14: SECTION 28D DDA**

### **Accessibility strategies and plans**

The Responsible Body must prepare:

- a) an accessibility strategy
- b) further strategies as may be prescribed

The accessibility strategy is for:

- a) Increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum.
- b) Improving the physical environment so that pupils with a disability can take advantage of the education and associated services provided by the school.
- c) Improving the delivery of the information to pupils with a disability that would normally be provided in writing to other pupils.

The Responsible Body must prepare:

- a) an accessibility plan.
- b) further plans as may be prescribed.

The accessibility plan is for:

- a) increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in the curriculum.
- b) improving the physical environment so that pupils with a disability can take advantage of the education and association services provided by the Schools.
- c) improving the delivery of information to pupils with a disadvantage that would normally be provided in writing to other pupils.

**The Accessibility Plan must be in writing; must be kept under review; must be implemented.**

## Appendix 2

### USEFUL CONTACTS

The following list gives examples of organisations that are able to provide assistance and offer disability training. In addition Local Authorities run short tailor-made training courses on disability issues. This list is not intended to be comprehensive. There are other organisations that offer help.

**1. AbilityNet**

Telephone: 0800 269545 Email: [enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk)

Website: [www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)

AbilityNet offers a comprehensive range of services to pupils, professionals, schools and statutory bodies and provides free information and advice on any aspect of the use of a computer by someone with a disability.

**2. British Dyslexia Association**

Telephone: 0333 405 4567 E-mail: [helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk)

Website: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)

The British Dyslexia Association offers advice, information and help to families, professionals and dyslexic individuals. The BDA is working to raise awareness and understanding of dyslexia and to effect change.

**3. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE)**

Telephone: 0117 353 3150 E-mail: [admin@csie.org.uk](mailto:admin@csie.org.uk) Website: [www.csie.org.uk](http://www.csie.org.uk)

CSIE gives information and advice about inclusive education and related issues and publishes the "Index for Inclusion".

**4. Department for Education**

Telephone: 0370 000 2288 Fax: 0161 600 1332

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)

The DfE website offers guidance, information and links to all areas of education and training for adults and young people.

**5. Equality and Human Rights Commission**

Telephone: 0808 800 0082 Website: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

**6. Keytools Limited**

Telephone: 0844 879 2282 Fax: 0844 879 2283 e-mail: [keytools@hypertec.co.uk](mailto:keytools@hypertec.co.uk)

Website: [www.keytools.co.uk](http://www.keytools.co.uk)

Suppliers of specialist IT equipment and resources for users with a disability.

**7. MENCAP**

Telephone: 0808 808 1111 Website: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Mencap works with children and adults with learning disabilities and their families and carers to improve their lives and opportunities.

**8. NASEN**

Telephone 01827 311500. Fax: 01827 313005

E-Mail: [welcome@nasen.org.uk](mailto:welcome@nasen.org.uk) Website: [www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

Nasen offers a range of courses, publications, resources and advice for schools, parents, governors, and LEA's on supporting learners with special educational needs.

**9. The National Autistic Society**

Telephone: 0808 800 4104 Website: [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

The National Autistic Society provides information, advice, training and support to families, professionals and organisations supporting people with Autism and Aspergers syndrome.

**10. Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) – including transcription centre**

Telephone: 0303 123 9999 Website: [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

RNIB offers practical support and advice to anyone with a sight problem.

**11. Action on Hearing Loss**

Telephone: 0808 808 0123 Textphone: 0808 808 9000

Email: [informationline@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:informationline@hearingloss.org.uk) Website: [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

Gives information and raised awareness of deafness, hearing loss and tinnitus. Provides training courses and consultancy.

**12. SCOPE**

Telephone: 0808 800 3333 E-mail: [helpline@scope.org.uk](mailto:helpline@scope.org.uk) Website: [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

**14. Tourettes Action**

Telephone: 0300 777 8427 Website: [www.tourettes-action.org.uk](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)

Tourettes Action (Tourettes Syndrome (UK) Association) develops and disseminates educational material to individuals, professionals and to agencies in education and health to help people and their families to cope with the problems that occur with Tourette Syndrome.