

GODOLPHIN SCHOOL

DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Reviewed by: Head of Prep, Senior Deputy Head,
Liaison with: Deputy Head Academic, Deputy Head Pastoral, SENCO
Last Reviewed: September 2020
Next Review: September 2021

Refer also to:

Equalities Act (2010)
Reasonable Adjustments for disabled pupils, 2015 (Guidance from Equality and Human Rights Commission)
Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, 2017 (Guidance from DfE)
Children and Families Act, 2014
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Regulations 2014
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice, DfE January 2015 (updated May 2015)
Admissions Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
SEND Policy



Disability and Accessibility

At Godolphin we consider that a student or prospective student is disabled where she has a physical or mental impairment which has a “substantial and long term adverse effect on her ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

We are aware that it is unlawful to discriminate without justification against disabled students in all aspects of school life.

The areas in which impairment may occur in our students are:

- sensory, ie speech, hearing, vision
- specific learning difficulties, such as Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Central Auditory Processing Disorder, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia
- memory – short or long term deficits
- ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- speech difficulties
- physical motor co-ordination
- gross or fine motorskills
- mobility
- ability to lift, carry or move things
- continence
- perception of the risk of physical danger
- medical conditions, such as diabetes
- emotional and/or physical state as a consequence of mental ill health

(This is based on the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Part IV)

Admissions

All prospective students must fulfil the School’s entrance criteria: ie they must show that they are likely to achieve success within the formal academic curriculum, while also finding time to develop other skills and interests. A candidate is therefore accepted on the understanding that the School is reasonably confident in its ability to educate and develop her to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by her peers. The expectation is that she will then have every chance of a complete, happy and successful career at School, and emerge as a confident, responsible and well-educated adult, with a good prospect of a satisfying life. Students are regularly assessed throughout their time at School to ensure that they continue to meet these criteria.

The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all students and potential students regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments so

that no disabled student or potential student is substantially disadvantaged through disability compared to any student who is not disabled. Our aim is to educate all students in such a way as to provide an education that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and enables them to fulfil their potential.

The School asks parents of a prospective student to complete a disability form at the time of application. In assessing any student or prospective student, 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.

Equal opportunities and accessibility

We undertake:

- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage
- to avoid treating disabled students less favourably
- to consider accessibility in future strategic planning

We do this by:

- increasing the extent to which our current and future disabled students can participate in the School's curriculum
- improving access through the physical environment
- making provision for the delivery of information in different forms for disabled students

Our action plan is available on the School website and on request at reasonable times, and is maintained separately from this policy. The plan is structured so that it addresses the three strands mentioned above. Accessibility is addressed in The Three-Year Development Plan which is reviewed through the Learning Access Committee.

The Physical Environment

The School acknowledges certain obvious problems for the physically disabled student. In common with many other schools, its lay-out covers a wide area and comprises separate buildings which have grown up since the School was established: most are of several storeys without lifts.

Another issue is the system, common to virtually all secondary schools, of having dedicated subject rooms, based on the educational need to deliver subjects within the most appropriate specialist environment. Thus students are required to move round the School for different lessons, and this involves using most buildings, including those with stairs and without lifts.

The boarding facilities pose a similar dilemma; however, there is a lift in Walters House which would facilitate boarding for a student who had a physical disability. Thus a student with impaired mobility will inevitably be disadvantaged to some degree, or may even be prohibited altogether from access to some or all of the educational and other facilities the School offers.

Nor can these matters always be remedied in any substantial way by reasonable adjustments, as they may require 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.

The Curriculum, Co-curricular Activities and School Life

Where appropriate, we will make the following reasonable adjustments which cover the curriculum, timetabling, sports, meals, interaction with peers, exams, outings and discipline:

- extra time on a subject-by-subject basis in assessments for students with Specific Learning Difficulties diagnosed or recognised by the School, substantiated by the teachers and in line with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) current requirements
- scripts of audio materials for students with hearing difficulties
- enlarged texts for students suffering from a visual impairment
- using overlays or different coloured paper for students suffering from a visual impairment
- wheelchair access on outings where possible
- extra help on outings where there are ADHD students
- extra training for staff dealing with new situations and disabilities
- facilitating the use of laptops/voice activated software for students who would underachieve on the grounds of their specific learning difficulty or weak motor co-ordination skills

Education, Health and Care Plans

It is recognised that not all disabled students have Special Educational Needs, but where this is the case the plans established will include all aspects of the student's needs and, where a student has a Local Authority Statement of special educational needs, will devolve into an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Notwithstanding, the School may also decide that in certain cases an EHC plan is the most helpful way to advance the student's needs.

The construction of the EHC plan counts on the participation of all concerned. This includes:

- the student
- the student's parents or carers
- professionals working with the student and her family
- teachers and pastoral staff at Godolphin
- the School SENCO and SEN staff

In this context, the student will be consulted and her views taken into account, due weight being accorded when taking into account her age, maturity and capability.

Exclusions

While it is always our wish that such reasonable adjustments may be made, this may sometimes prove impossible within our specific context. In such cases, the School reserves the right a) to refuse entry to a new student; b) to request that a current student withdraw should her situation become impossible to manage appropriately.

Such exclusions are likely to result from all or any of the following factors:

- the School's inability to educate and develop the student to the best of her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by her peers
- the interests of other students in the School
- health and safety legislation
- the School's limited financial resources

Students who are temporarily disabled

From time to time a student may become temporarily disabled. When this occurs the student will be assessed by the Sister in charge of the Health Centre who will make recommendations for adjustments to be made in order to enable the student to continue with her studies and to participate as fully as possible in the everyday life of the School; for a student using crutches, for example, this may involve relocating lessons to the ground floor where possible and allowing her to leave lessons early in order to avoid the general exodus from a room or a building. If she is a boarder, this might mean temporarily living in Walters House, where there is a lift.

Students may also become temporarily disabled as a result of emotional needs. It will be the responsibility of the Head of Year and House staff to liaise with the School Nurse and the external agencies involved, where appropriate, to assess and make recommendations for helping students on an individual basis.

Coronavirus

Students with SEND may have additional difficulties and be more vulnerable as a result of lockdown. Where the School considers that a student's wellbeing might be adversely affected by being at home during lockdown imposed by the government or Public Health authorities, this student can be invited into School to learn alongside the children of key workers. If the child is considered at risk or that their learning is being significantly affected, the DSL should be notified and appropriate actions taken.

Staff are asked to ensure that access to online learning is facilitated for students with special learning needs or other disability, for example using Teams to provide worksheets through assignments and support sheets in Classroom Materials with regular feedback to the student. On return to School, staff are expected to be alert for difficulties these students may have faced and may present and, where these are detected, to liaise closely with the SEN department to ensure that any learning gaps are covered and emotional needs addressed.