

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Independent Boarding and Day School for Boys and Girls

Royal Hospital School

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Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Introduction

The Royal Hospital School (the School) is committed to treating its pupils and prospective pupils fairly. According to the Equality Act 2010, the School must take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils and prospective pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage by comparison with pupils and prospective pupils who are not disabled.

The School recognises that every child is unique. This policy does not therefore seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement of our policy which sets out the principles underlying our approach to making adjustments for disabled pupils and prospective pupils and some of the factors the School may take into account when considering requests for adjustments.

When does the duty arise?

The School has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 when they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils and prospective pupils who do not have disabilities.

A pupil or applicant is disabled if he/she suffers from a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. In most cases, a disability will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

What is the scope of the duty?

The School seeks to ensure that disabled pupils and prospective pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments:

- to our provision, criterion and practices (i.e. the way the School does things); and
- by providing auxiliary aids and services (i.e. additional support or assistance).

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples include:

- pieces of equipment;
- extra staff assistance;
- note-taking;
- induction loops;
- audio-visual fire alarms;
- readers; and
- assistance with guiding.

What is not covered?

The School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. Similarly, the School does not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the School.

Entry tests

The School is allowed by law to apply an entry test and does so as part of its admissions process. If necessary, the School makes reasonable adjustments for disabled prospective pupils sitting the entry test, such as, for example, allowing it to be completed on a computer rather than by hand or providing additional time for completing the entry test. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment.

How do I request an adjustment?

The School prides itself on considering whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled pupil or prospective pupil. However, the School cannot always think of all possible adjustments and wants to work with parents to think as creatively as possible about this matter.

If your child is disabled and you believe that he/she is being put at a substantial disadvantage compared with pupils without disabilities and there is a reasonable adjustment that the School could make which would overcome this, you may write to the Head of Learning Support who is also the School's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (or "SENCO"), setting out in full the suggested adjustment and (if necessary) how the School could put this into practice.

The School's response

In some cases, the School will be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment as soon as possible. In particular, it is envisaged that where an adjustment satisfies the non cost-related criteria listed below, it will be approved and implemented speedily. In other cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult or more financially costly, the School may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the substantial disadvantage that the pupil or prospective pupil is suffering and what measures it is reasonable for the School to take. In these cases, the School may seek input from teachers, other experts (such as doctors and/or educational psychologists), you and the child in question.

How will the School decide whether an adjustment is reasonable?

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, the School may consider the following factors:

- whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering;
- the practicability of the adjustment;
- the effect of the disability on the pupil or prospective pupil;
- the cost of the proposed adjustment;
- whether it will be provided under a statement of special educational needs from the Local Authority;
- the School's resources;
- health and safety requirements;
- the need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards; and
- the interests of other pupils (and prospective pupils).

Confidentiality

You (or your child if the School believes he/she has sufficient understanding of the nature of the request) may request that the existence or nature of your child's disability be treated as confidential by the School. The School will take any such request into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable.

Outcome

Once the School has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, the School will write to you, setting out its decision and the reasons for it.

What can you do if you are not happy with the School's decision?

If you are not happy with the School's decision about the reasonableness of any proposed adjustment, you may lodge a complaint using the School's Complaints Procedure.