



READING SCHOOL REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

The Companies Act 2006

Reading School (The Academy) is the employer. The business of the Academy Trust is managed by the Governing Body.

Related Policies:

Accessibility Plan
Discriminatory Incidents Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality Objectives
SEND Policy
Complaints Policy

Introduction

Reading 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 (meaning more than minor or trivial) by comparison with pupils and prospective pupils who are not disabled.

The School recognises that every child is unique, what is reasonable in one set of circumstances may not be reasonable in another. This policy does not therefore seek to cater for every situation. It is intended as a general statement 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 (meaning more than minor or trivial) and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing.

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.

How do I request an adjustment?

The School has a duty to anticipate and consider 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 children, parents and those who know the child to identify what those needs are and what is likely to be most effective.

Current Pupils:

If your child is disabled and parents believe that he is being or would be 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, parents may write to the Head of Student Support (srogers@reading-school.co.uk) who is also the School's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (or "SENDSCO"), setting out in full the suggested adjustment, evidence for the need and (if necessary) how the School could put this into practice. This may prompt further discussion in order to find agreement. In conducting external examinations, the school ensures it is fully compliant with all JCQ guidance and regulations regarding reasonable adjustments.

Prospective Pupils (Entrance Test):

As a Selective State Grammar School, Reading School is allowed by law to apply an entrance test and does so as part of its admissions process. If necessary, the School makes reasonable adjustments for disabled prospective pupils sitting the entrance test, such as, for example, applying extra time, familiarisation visits, providing a scribe, separate room, access to food/drink, including rest breaks, and enlarging papers. As far as possible, these will be according to the prospective pupil's usual way of working, as discussed with the child, parents, primary school SENCO and other agencies. However, the pass mark for the test is not altered as this would not be a reasonable adjustment, nor is special consideration given to candidates' circumstances when papers are marked.

Deadline for submitting requests for reasonable adjustments for the Entrance Test:

Parents are asked to provide details of their child's disability or disadvantage (eg. particular SEN or medical needs) on the Entrance Test Registration Form. Once submitted, parents should email: admissions@reading-school.co.uk with appropriate evidence. For medical needs this will normally take the form of a letter from a hospital consultant or specialist confirming the candidate's medical condition and the need for special arrangements. For a student with SEN, evidence must include a letter from the primary school SENCO confirming that there is a need for the adjustment requested and that such adjustments have been in place as a candidate's normal way of working in primary school. Any details of a formal diagnosis of SEN should also be provided. Please note that it is the responsibility of parents to provide sufficient evidence for the child's case to be assessed. This must all be provided to admissions@reading-school.co.uk and copied to the SENDSCO, srogers@reading-school.co.uk.

The School's response

Where a requested adjustment satisfies the non-cost related criteria listed below, the school may be able to approve and implement it 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), parents and the child in question. For prospective pupils, we will also hold conversations with the child's existing school to find out normal practice in examination conditions.

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 (non-exhaustive list):

- The extent to which taking any particular step would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled pupil
- The practicability and effectiveness of the adjustment
- The effect of the disability on the individual
- Health and safety requirements - The Act does not override health and safety legislation but schools are not required to eliminate all risk
- The resources of the school and the availability of financial or other assistance
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustment
- The need to maintain academic, musical, sporting and other standards
- The interests of other pupils and prospective pupils - relevant only where the adjustment results in significant disadvantage (not just inconvenience) for other pupils
- Existing provision through statement of SEN/EHCP, or external agency

Confidentiality

Parents (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 parents, setting out its decision and the reasons for it.

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

If parents are not happy with the School's decision about the reasonableness of any proposed adjustment, parents may lodge a complaint using the School's Complaints Procedure. For parents of prospective students who are not happy with the decision and have discussed this prior to testing with the admissions office, they will have the right to appeal once school places have been allocated on 1st March (National Offer Day).

Approved by:

Date:

To be reviewed

March 2022