



WARGRAVE HOUSE

THE AUTISM SPECIALISTS

Accessibility Policy

November 2020



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| Committee: | <i>Compliance and Estates Management</i> |
| Approved by the full Governing Body: | <i>December 2020</i> |

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| This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: | |
| 1 | <i>SEND Policy</i> |
| 2 | Health and Safety Policy |
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1 Statement

Wargrave House is committed to ensuring that each student achieves their full potential whilst with us as either a residential or day student. All of our students are treated as individuals and we work closely with parents/carers/other relevant agencies to ensure that students needs are identified, recorded and reviewed regularly.

Under the Equality Act (2010), Wargrave House School is required to have an Accessibility Policy and Plan. Our plan is underpinned by our core values, namely;

We believe everyone matters.

We work in a way to ensure that everyone who is involved with Wargrave at any level is treated with respect, kindness, compassion and empathy. They should know that they are valued and are included and informed about decisions that may affect them.

We have integrity,

We stay true to our mission and our values, we are consistent and we do what we say we do.

Positive communication,

We make sure that we are approachable and that we provide clear messages about our organisation. When there are difficult conversations to be had we do these in a way that is respectful. We openly embrace complaints as a way of learning and we use these to support our growth as an organisation. We share compliments and we celebrate the successes of our people

Aspirational,

We don't place glass ceiling on anyone we will support our people to achieve their chosen goals. We will never stop learning, we want to be recognised as *the* autism specialists because this means that our people are getting the best quality services

The purpose of this policy is to show how we will;

- Improve the physical environment where possible
- Remove barriers
- Ensure the curriculum is personalised so it is suitable for all students

2 Physical Environment

Wargrave House will endeavor to improve the existing physical environment for students/staff with disabilities as far as is reasonably practicable and via what is considered to be a reasonable adjustment. This may include the financial resources available, the practicality of making any changes to the physical environment and the overall impact of making any changes to other students/staff. The Governing Body will oversee all future plans to ensure that the design or construction of new buildings are suitable for those with disabilities and in line with statutory guidance.

Where needs dictate, staff or students main working area will be located on ground floor level with their peers. A lift is available in the 'new building' part of main school to access administration offices and the staff study area/staff room, and LEAP College to access residential areas. Where possible, disabled visitors will be provided with parking spaces onsite and meetings will take place in the Conference Room in main school, where a disabled WC is close-by. The reception desk is multi-level to allow visitors using wheelchairs to sign in and out.

Specialised equipment such as adjustable height tables or hearing loops will be provided, in line with financial constraints, as required.

3 Removing Barriers

All students admitted to Wargrave House have a diagnosis of autism. This is the primary barrier to learning for our students, although some do have other medical and/or educational needs which we also work to address. Wargrave House will continue to work with and engage with other specialists (eg autism specific, social care, therapeutic and others), in order to remove potential barriers to learning and accessing information for our students. Pictorial guides will be used where required and signs will be clear and legible in classrooms and communal areas.

Where possible, we will anticipate needs and put into place resources to assist students/ staff before they start at Wargrave House.

4 The Curriculum

Each student is provided with an individualized curriculum, with realistic yet challenging targets. The residential and day curriculum work alongside and complement each other and staff regularly meet to discuss targets and set new ones.

Work experience, residential trips and community activities are all carefully planned and risk assessed to ensure that the students are able to access wider experiences and practice supervised social communications and interactions. No one is excluded from this on the grounds of disability and all students are encouraged and have the opportunity to participate.

Diversity is valued and taught throughout the students educational career in a way which is individualised, relatable and meaningful for each. Every element of the curriculum for all age groups will be accessible to each and every student.

5 Arrangements

WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

A disability is defined by the Equalities Act (2010) as;

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

Disability discrimination can be direct or indirect.

TRAINING

Where necessary, training will be given to enable staff to meet the needs of disabled pupils, students and public.

REASONABLE FACTORS

Several factors have a bearing on whether it is reasonable for the school/college to make physical changes to the school/college.

- The extent to which it is practicable for a provider to take the measures
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustments
- The extent of disruption which taking the measures would cause
- The amount of resources already spent on making adjustments
- The availability of financial or other assistance.

6 Accessibility Plan

Wargrave House will aim to undertake the below actions annually or as required;

- Carry out internally, or engage a specialist to undertake an accessibility audit of the physical environment of the school grounds and buildings
- Act upon the results of the audit, where reasonably practicable, considering the below areas;
 - current and anticipated student and staff cohort
 - financial implications and the practicality of undertaking such actions/adjustments
 - the extent of disruption which taking the measures would cause
 - the amount of resources already spent on making adjustments

- Consider the physical environment and its suitability for new students as part of their initial suitability assessment prior to admission to Wargrave House. A trial period may be agreed with parents/carers prior to a place being offered
- Ensure that the curriculum does not disadvantage students with disabilities and it is accessible for all

Policy Impact

We have a rolling programme for reviewing our Company policies. We regularly review the impact of our policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for students, service users, staff and parents.