

# **DISABILITY POLICY AND STRATEGY**

Responsible:	Director
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External Release:	Yes

**Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (A)**

*Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?*

Kingfisher Education evaluates each prospective student on an individual basis before they begin their course of study. Considering the extensive and ever-growing list of medical (physical and psychological) conditions, this personalized assessment also includes students with learning or language difficulties and/or disabilities.

It is essential to disclose any medical conditions that may impact a student's course with Kingfisher Education at the time of enrolment, as this is crucial for the student's safety and wellbeing. This information is provided on the enrolment form. "Please be aware that if any physical or psychological condition, such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, allergies, anorexia, or bulimia, is not disclosed on this Enrolment Form, students will be required to leave the school without a refund of fees." (Kingfisher Education Enrolment Form). Additionally, a student health questionnaire is currently under development and will be integrated into the overall enrolment process.

Information regarding an adult student's specific medical condition or individual requirements is communicated to the Adult Department through various channels. Typically, this information comes from the Admissions department, the Registrar, an Agent, or through emails sent directly to the College by the parents or the students themselves.

A few examples of what procedures are in place for students with special requirements are recorded below;

1. **Dyslexia** – When a student is recognised as having dyslexia, this information is entered into the database, and a **green tutorial card is generated**. Teachers then inquire about the specific needs for special consideration, while the Director of Studies communicates with the two or three class teachers to inform them about the student's dyslexia. Teachers have received training on this topic through an Inset, and they may also receive personalized guidance on how to teach students with dyslexia from our SpLD Specialist.

2. **EBD** - Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) are often not revealed on enrolment forms for several reasons: students may not recognise these issues, parents might hesitate to disclose them, or such difficulties may arise after the student arrives in the UK due to the challenges of adapting to a new country with unfamiliar customs and cultures. Numerous studies have explored human behaviour, highlighting why individuals act differently in foreign environments. EBD is typically more prevalent among younger students, who may experience homesickness, test boundaries, or face the challenges of being away from their parents for the first time. In contrast, adult students usually exhibit more stability, having matured and gained experience over the years.

However, in the rare instances when an adult student at Kingfisher Education is identified as having an Emotional and Behavioural Disorder (EBD), such as Bipolar Disorder, the institution maintains ongoing communication with both the student's parents and their agent. A risk assessment is

conducted, and an individualised action plan is established. Having an EBD does not automatically disqualify a student from studying at Kingfisher Education. For instance, in the case of the student with Bipolar Disorder, the student's parents were required to accompany them in Bournemouth for the initial three months of their studies after a recent episode, to ensure a smooth transition and adjustment period for the student.

<sup>1</sup> Please consult the Adult Department ISI Inspection Portfolio, specifically Section 6, which addresses students identified with learning or language difficulties and/or disabilities. In this section, evaluate whether the provided curriculum meets their needs, particularly in relation to (A) Dyslexia and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

<sup>2</sup> Bipolar disorder, also referred to as bipolar affective disorder and previously known as manic-depressive disorder, is a psychiatric diagnosis characterized by significant mood swings. These mood fluctuations include periods of intense energy known as mania (or hypomania), often alternating with episodes of depression. The condition is defined by the occurrence of one or more episodes marked by unusually high levels of energy, cognition, and mood, which may occur alongside one or more depressive episodes. (Wikipedia)

## **Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (B)**

*Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?*

In continuation from the previous section, additional examples of the procedures established for students with special requirements are detailed below:

3. **Diabetes** – When a student with diabetes is identified prior to their course start, it is crucial to gather comprehensive information from the student, parents, or agents regarding the student's specific needs and type of diabetes (Type 1 or Type 2). Additionally, it is important to discuss the proper storage of the student's supplies and equipment. The following checklist has been tailored to accommodate the student, ensuring that class teachers and activity staff are informed about necessary allowances and considerations in the classroom.

- a. Hypo remedies – does the student need glucose sweets, a sugary drink or a follow-on snack in the classroom?
- b. Insulin – does the student have an insulin pen as well as spares in case of breakages? Can the student administer his/her own injections?
- c. Blood glucose meter and strips – does the student have this as well as spares in case of breakages or malfunction?
- d. Ketone – does the student have ketone strips (either blood or urine)?

While Kingfisher Education does have the facilities to store supplies and equipment for diabetic students, it is preferable that the student carry these around with them so that they are easily accessible at all times.

When a specific student is identified, the Director of Studies notifies the student's class teachers, outlining the student's unique needs and suggesting ways to accommodate them. For instance, allowing the student to consume sugary snacks or drink a glucose beverage in the classroom. Teachers are consistently reminded of the sensitivity surrounding this matter and are encouraged to avoid drawing excessive attention to the condition, always prioritising the feelings of the affected student in their classroom decisions.

Teachers are encouraged to engage directly with the student to discuss their needs, as the individual most affected understands their condition best. This conversation should take place privately, away from the hearing of other students, and conducted with sensitivity and empathy. Additionally, teachers receive an informational leaflet about diabetes, and relevant details are recorded in the database.

**4. Sensory Impairment – Hearing.** Kingfisher Education has seen a limited number of students with hearing impairments in recent years. If inquiries are made regarding an adult with hearing loss, a formal risk assessment will be conducted, just as it is for all students identified with any form of disability, to determine if the college can provide the necessary accommodations for the student.

Examples of assessment factors are;

-mild/moderate hearing loss – placing student next to the teacher or at the front of the class, reminding teachers not to speak to the student if they are standing behind them, reminding teachers to check with the students that they can hear the CD being played, writing homework on the board instead of giving it verbally.

-moderate/ severe hearing loss – Kingfisher Education does not have the loop system but, with advance notice, it would be able to employ sign language teachers. As with all disabilities, this would be done via the risk assessment process to ascertain whether Kingfisher Education would be able to accommodate the student.

Our SpLDs specialist can offer bespoke information on how to help a student.

### **Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (C)**

*Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?*

In continuation of the previous section, further examples of what procedures are in place for students with special requirements are recorded below;

#### **4. Physical Disabilities – mobility aids**

Kingfisher Education has welcomed students who needed additional mobility aids, such as crutches, wheelchairs, and walking frames. These students were accommodated in easily accessible rooms on the ground floor (rooms 25, 20, Res. 2, and Res. 3, as they were 16 or 17 years old). The student who used a wheelchair was assigned a "buddy" for assistance.

Additionally, Kingfisher Education provides for a Trinity examiner, who enters the premises through the back door of the Residence building and conducts examinations in Residence 3.

The organization also employs a teacher who relies on crutches. In line with the Disability and Equality Act 2010, the interviewer did not mention this teacher's disability during the interview and selection process, as hiring decisions are based solely on qualifications, experience, a satisfactory DBS check, and references. Once the teacher was confirmed as a successful candidate for the teaching position, the Senior Teacher (ST) approached her to discuss the need for a risk assessment form. It was crucial to communicate both verbally and in writing that the risk assessment process was unrelated to her employment offer and was designed to provide positive support.

This conversation opened a vital dialogue between the ST and the applicant, acknowledging that disabilities can sometimes be misunderstood by employers and employees alike. Using the DirectGov website as a guide, the Junior Courses Manager held a meeting with the applicant to complete the risk assessment form together. All potential risks were evaluated, and solutions for each issue were discussed, allowing for 'reasonable adjustments' to be implemented for the new teacher. For instance, they assured her that she would be scheduled to work on the ground floor, eliminating the need to navigate stairs and ensuring an easy escape route in case of fire. An evacuation plan was also established for fire emergencies. Please refer to the attached risk assessment for further details.

#### **5. Expectant Mothers**

Kingfisher Education has had the opportunity to welcome several students and hire teachers and staff members who are expecting. Among them was a teacher in her third trimester. A meeting was arranged between the expectant mother and a supervising teacher (ST) to facilitate open communication and complete a risk assessment form. This meeting also served as a chance for the ST to explain the four key rights that pregnant employees have: paid time off for antenatal appointments, maternity leave, maternity pay benefits (if applicable), and protection against unfair treatment or dismissal. A risk assessment form was filled out, and necessary adjustments were identified to safeguard both the expectant mother and her unborn child. Potential risks in a teaching environment may arise from factors such as lifting or carrying heavy items, prolonged standing or sitting, and extended working hours. Once communication is established, Kingfisher Education's primary goal is

to maintain an open line between the line manager and the employee, ensuring awareness and adaptability to the expectant mother's evolving condition.

Please refer to the attached risk assessment in this section.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) plays a vital role in helping employers make safer recruitment decisions, thereby preventing unsuitable individuals from working with vulnerable groups, including children. The DBS has replaced the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). It operates as an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Home Office (GOV.UK 2018).

Please note that the Direct Gov website was replaced by [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) on October 17, 2012. For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/employment>.

## **Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (D)**

*Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?*

While Kingfisher Education aims to support all individuals with disabilities who wish to join the school, it acknowledges that not all disabilities can be accommodated. As outlined in earlier sections, every prospective student with a disability undergoes an individual risk assessment process. Below are examples where certain limitations have been encountered:

### **6. Wheelchair Users**

Kingfisher Education currently lacks adequate facilities to comfortably accommodate a wheelchair-bound individual without a carer. This situation primarily arises from the absence of ramps leading into the buildings and the lack of accessible bathroom facilities for wheelchair users. However, plans are underway to construct an accessible toilet in the Residence building, close to the existing restrooms. Recently, a Trinity GESE examiner, who uses a wheelchair, visited Kingfisher Education to conduct a four-hour exam. Upon booking the exam, the Director of Studies (DOS) was made aware of the examiner's disability and attempted to dissuade him from attending due to the inadequate toilet facilities. Ultimately, the examiner expressed his willingness to proceed with the four-hour exam despite the lack of restroom access. Consequently, arrangements were made to accommodate him in other ways, such as scheduling the exam on the ground floor, reserving a parking space outside the exam room, informing him that he would use the fire escape doors for entry and exit, notifying the Fire Marshalls, adding the examiner's name to the Fire watch checklist, providing all necessary writing materials in the exam room, and even serving him tea or coffee during the exam.

## **7. Blind/Partially Sighted students**

Recently, Kingfisher Education received an inquiry from an adult student with partial sight. The Director of Studies guided her through the building while discussing the available and unavailable facilities at Kingfisher Education. They covered academic details, including options for orally-based classes and the possibility of having an assistant to take notes, along with the resources and tools the student regularly utilizes. After reviewing all the facilities and exploring her options, the student independently concluded that studying at Kingfisher Education would not be suitable for her due to the severity of her blindness.

As noted, there are limitations to the support Kingfisher Education can offer to students and teachers with disabilities. Nevertheless, Kingfisher Education's primary goal is to:

- a. Treat each case on an individual basis
- b. Treat each case with sensitivity and with an awareness of legislation such as the Equality Act 2010<sup>5</sup>
- c. Open up dialogue between Kingfisher Education (the provider) and the student/teacher (the service user)
- d. Conduct a detailed risk assessment together with the disabled person
- e. Work together to make reasonable adjustments and find solutions to individual issues

<sup>5</sup> [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/)

## **Where Students Have Been Identified As Having Learning Or Language Difficulties And/Or Disabilities (E)**

*Does the Curriculum provided meet their needs?*

## **Disclosure Of Medical Information Adult**

### **Students**

For Students who are over 18 years and who wish to enrol on a course at Kingfisher Education, they must fill in an enrolment application form (for lower level students with the assistance of the agent or, if available, one of the bi-lingual members of staff)<sup>6</sup>.

On the enrolment form it states;

*Do you suffer from any illnesses or disabilities? Yes/No Do you have another medical condition? Yes/No*

*If you have answered yes to any questions, please give details.*

*Please note that if any physical or psychological condition, including diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, allergies, anorexia or bulimia, is not disclosed on this Enrolment form, students will be asked to leave the College and no fees will be refunded.*

When a medical condition is revealed, it is communicated to the appropriate departments. Sharing medical information with staff is handled with the highest level of sensitivity, confidentiality, and strictly on a 'need to know' basis. In the adult department, the Director of Studies records the medical condition in the departmental database and, when necessary, shares this information with the student's class teachers. Students are provided with green tutorial cards, and the Director of Studies also notifies the Kingfisher Education Qualified First Aiders.

The Kingfisher Education Safeguarding Committee - Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kingfisher Education Director / Health and Safety Officer, Principal, Director of Studies and Accommodation Manager meet regularly and informally, when the need arises, to discuss these issues.

## **Adult Teachers**

For educators of adult learners applying to work at Kingfisher Education, the Equality Act (2010) prohibits inquiries about a candidate's disability or illness during the interview process. As mentioned earlier and elaborated in a later section, the recruitment process for adult teachers focuses on qualifications, experience, responses to subject and classroom management questions, satisfactory references, and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. However, after extending an offer of employment to a successful candidate, part of the new teacher induction process involves completing a staff member details form. This form allows the teacher to disclose any pertinent medical conditions. If a significant condition is revealed (such as pregnancy or the use of crutches), the Director of Studies will coordinate risk assessments and initiate discussions with the new employee regarding their disclosure.