

# Castle Community College Disability Discrimination Scheme 2010 - 2013

## Introduction

The Disability Equality Duty requires schools, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Duties under Part 5A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) require our governing body to:

- promote equality of opportunity for people with disability needs: students, staff, parents, carers and other people who use the school or may wish to; and
- prepare and publish a disability equality scheme to show how we will meet these duties.

This scheme and the accompanying action plan sets out how the governing body will promote equality of opportunity for people with disability needs. Part 1 of the DDA provides the definition of disability. The definition informs the duties in the other parts of the DDA. Parts 2, 3 and 4 of the DDA apply to different aspects of the school's operation:

- Part 2 sets out duties to disabled employees and prospective employees;
- Part 3 sets out duties to disabled service users;
- Part 4 sets out duties to disabled students and potential students.

Duties in Part 4 of the DDA require our governing body to plan to increase access to education for students with disability needs in 3 ways:

- increasing participation in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which advantage can be taken of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery of information which is provided.

This scheme incorporates Castle Community College's plans to increase access to education for students with disability needs, as defined under the Act. The Duty was introduced into the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) in 2005 and sets out:

- a general duty to promote disability equality, which applies to all public authorities; and
- a specific duty, which includes a requirement to prepare and publish a disability equality scheme showing how Castle Community College is meeting its general duty.

The DDA applies to Castle Community College's three main school functions:

- to the school in its main function of providing education to students;
- to the school as an employer;
- to the school as a provider of services to parents and carers and the wider public.

The Scheme:

1.1 The College seeks to proactively promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people in all its functions. It pays due regard to the Disability Discrimination Act and acts within the law to ensure equality of opportunity. College policies and procedures are upheld to ensure that harassment of disabled people, related to their disability, is eliminated. We seek ways to promote positive attitudes towards people with disability needs and encourage active participation in all aspects of our community, within the college itself and the community in its wider sense. Castle Community College undertakes to meet the needs of disabled people, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

1.2 A working group has been set up to monitor the college's scheme and to report to the governing body. It comprises a member of the governing body and of SMT, students, staff and parents with disability needs, Head of PD Unit and staff regularly working within the Unit. The creation of this group as a model of good practice was derived partly from the previous Scheme and Action Plan, 2007-2010, which successfully involved students, parents, carers and staff in monitoring, reviewing and evaluating provision and also from the identification of Castle Community College as a Lead School in the Dover, Deal & Sandwich cluster for students with physical disability needs. The make-up of the working group will be able to provide insights into the barriers faced by students, staff and parents with disability needs; bring expertise in identifying ways to overcome these barriers and improve working relationships between students, staff and parents.

1.3 The College Working Group will gather information on the effect of policies on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees; the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of students with disability needs and the arrangements for using information to support the review of the action plan and to inform subsequent schemes. In each circumstance where information is gathered, communication preferences of those taking part will be considered.

In order to gather meaningful information, it is important that the definition of disability under the DDA is known and understood. The DDA defines a disabled person as someone who has:

‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’

Definition of the terms:

- ‘physical impairment’ includes sensory impairments;
- ‘mental impairment’ includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness;
- ‘substantial’ means ‘more than minor or trivial’; and
- ‘long-term’ is defined as 12 months or more.

The definition includes a wide range of impairments such as dyslexia, autism, speech and language impairments, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These are likely to amount to a disability only if the effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is substantial and long-term, as defined above.

The effect on normal day-to-day activities is on one or more of the following:

- mobility;
- manual dexterity;
- physical co-ordination;
- continence;
- ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- speech, hearing or eyesight;
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand;
- perception of risk of physical danger.

Some people are automatically covered by the definition: those with cancer, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection or a severe disfigurement and there are special provisions for people with progressive or recurring conditions.

The Working Group will seek opportunities to raise awareness of the inclusions under the definition as appropriate, with a view to recommending the sort of adjustments that can be made and the benefits of these. It will explain why information is needed and reassure re-assure students, staff and parents about confidentiality.

The College will ensure that the ethos is conducive to disclosure: people will feel more comfortable about acknowledging an impairment or health condition if the circumstances in which they are asked about it encourage them to believe that the information they disclose will be handled sensitively and confidentially and used to improve opportunities and outcomes for them.

Information about the recruitment, development and retention of employees with disability needs applies to all those working at the college in whatever capacity and includes those who are working under a contract. The College will liaise with the Local Authority where appropriate in gathering this information. The subsequent aim is to be able to analyse the information in respect of the representation of staff with disability needs under a number of headings as detailed in the plan.

The gathering of information on students with disability needs will include an analysis of:

Presence:

- how many disabled pupils there are in the school;
- which impairment groups are represented in the school; and
- whether there are groups of disabled pupils who are not represented at the school.

Participation:

- whether there are areas of the curriculum to which disabled pupils have limited or no access.
- whether disabled pupils participate in extra-curricular activities
- whether there are parts of the school to which disabled pupils have limited or no access at the moment, or whether physical features of the school environment hamper access to the whole life of the school;
- whether different forms of communication are made available to enable all disabled pupils to express their views and to hear the views of others;
- whether access to information is planned, with a range of different formats available for disabled pupils; and
- whether other issues affect the participation of disabled pupils.

The achievements of disabled pupils, including:

- exams;
- accredited learning;
- end of key stage outcomes;
- comparative progress measured by the optional SATs;
- achievements in extra-curricular activities; and
- broader outcomes such as those set out in *Every Child Matters*.

Information on disabled parents, carers and others using the college will be collected as part of general communication with people having contact with the college, although it is not part of the General Duty. It does, however, enable the college to more readily uphold the DDA for those people visiting the college who have disability needs.

1.4 Impact assessment allows us to undertake a systematic analysis of the effects of college policies, practice and procedure for students, staff and parents with disabled needs.

The main mechanism by which we will assess the impact of our current policies will be by bringing together:

- the issues identified through the involvement of disabled pupils, staff and parents; and
- the information that the school holds on the disabled pupils, staff and parents.

This enables college to make a judgement about the relevance and significance of our policies to disability equality, which in turn determines where the school needs to set its priorities and whether changes are needed to improve equality of opportunity.

This assessment will be made annually in preparation for the first full governors' meeting in September, when student attainment can be included in the information shared, in addition to policy review outcomes. Throughout the year, the working group will gather information and interim reports will be produced for the governing body on practice and procedures, using the Disability Scheme and Action Plan as a working document which it monitors regularly at its meetings. Policies that will be reviewed using the LA Impact Assessment Tool will be those affecting:

- student progress, attainment and assessment
- student development and pastoral care
- teaching and learning
- admissions and attendance
- the content of the curriculum
- staff recruitment and professional development
- partnerships with parents and communities
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions

## 2.1 The General Duty:

Castle Community College is already making reasonable adjustments to ensure that all students go on school trips. However, we aim to promote greater engagement of parents /carers and systematic consideration of information to identify further action to promote equality of opportunity. School trips represent a difficult area: parents cannot reasonably be expected to accompany their children, and often children state that they resent the fact that their parents are invited too, limiting the development of their independence. As part of their scheme, the school undertakes to set the following target:

- parents will be asked for their specific input on ensuring that the young person receives utmost care during the trip whilst enjoying every opportunity available to them. Parents / carers can then be assured that their child is safe, happy and well-cared for whilst taking advantage of the same opportunities offered to all others in the college.

A small group of students with a disability is to be involved in the development of a secondary school scheme, which may then be rolled out to other cluster schools. Four of the students have a physical impairment and have talked about difficulties in two areas of the curriculum: PE and sex education. The college working group will:

- review the school's sex education programme in the light of the students' concerns;
- explore some new sport and PE activities and
- ask one of the learning support assistants to work with a group of students with learning difficulties to establish their views as well, particularly through the 'All Together' drama group to prompt the discussion and support communication of the group's views.

The students will also set up an e-community with students that have disability needs in other local schools, sharing good practice, raising awareness and generally having fun sharing gossip!

There are a significant number of students with behaviours on the autistic spectrum at the college. A comprehensive programme of training has been undertaken by LSAs regularly working with the young people and teaching staff have also had regular training updates. However, new staff join the college and further refresher training is also required to remind staff about the communication needs of students with autism. The following steps will be taken:

- the SENCO will provide subject-specific resources and materials and then arrange for departments to work together on agreeing strategies for meeting the communication needs of pupils with autism in each classroom, as part of the Inclusion Development Programme. New staff will also have separate induction sessions focusing on this and meeting the needs of other students with a disability, to which all staff are also invited.
- the SENCO will involve the pupils and their parents in the development of a note to all staff to ensure that staff are aware of some key considerations in their interactions with the pupils;
- the actions they agree will be incorporated into the school's disability equality scheme.

National figures confirm that bullying is more prevalent than is often thought and is more so for disabled students. The Social Exclusion Unit found that about 17 percent of all children report being bullied. In a survey commissioned by the National Autistic Society, 40 percent of children on the autistic spectrum were found to have been bullied at school. Castle Community College will raise awareness amongst staff and students of disability-related harassment, which will help to address it. The involvement of students themselves via the working group is a key feature of an effective system for combating bullying. Our anti-bullying policy will be updated by the working group and then presented to governors. Our whole-school contribution to Anti-Bullying Week and to our Safe-School accreditation will be planned by members of the same group with students from each year group invited to attend and staff who wish to do so.

Steps that we will take:

- the immediate challenge to be provided to pupils using negative race- or disability-related or sexist language;
- a range of actions, including assemblies and class work, to promote mutual respect

Positive attitudes to disability can be promoted in a wide variety of ways in schools. This includes ensuring:

- staff model respectful attitudes to disabled students, staff and parents;
- that there are positive images in school books and other materials.

As a Sports College, Castle Community is keen to promote the participation of disabled people in the Paralympics in 2012, following on from its participation in the events following the Beijing Games in 2008. The working group will:

- start a poster campaign, with positive images of young disabled people participating in sports and of well known disabled athletes;
- work with other local schools to plan a programme to enable disabled pupils to develop skills to a more advanced level.

### 3.1 Implementation & Reporting

Castle Community College's scheme and action plan will be acted upon and monitored through the working group and presentations to SMT and governors, making clear:

- what progress has been made in terms of implementing the action plan; and
- what has been the effect of the implementation.

Information will be reviewed and with the views of students, staff and parents, will help the college to identify the progress made and the actions it may still need to take. This will be summarised in the annual report.

### 3.2 Publication

The college's scheme will be published separately but will form part of the General Equality Duty and equal opportunities policy. It will be readily available to anyone who requests it.

### 3.3 Review and Evaluation

The review of the scheme will inform its revision: how the college sets new priorities and new action plans for the next scheme. This process will again:

- involve students, staff and parents with disability needs; and
- be based on information that the school has gathered.

Signed: .....Principal

Signed: .....Chair of governors

Date: 01.09.09

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