



## Disability Equality & Accessibility Plan

Castle School is a purpose built Local Authority school for pupils aged 3 - 19 with a wide range of Special Educational Needs including pupils with physical and learning disabilities.

### **School Ethos**

Castle School is committed to ensuring equal treatment of all its pupils, employees and other members of our community, with any form of disability. We will ensure that disabled people are not treated less favourably and that we raise the diversity of individual talents and creativity. What do we understand by 'disability'?

"Disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (DDA 1995 part 1 paragraph 1.1). This definition was amended and broadened in December 2005 under the 2005 Disability Amendment Act.

We recognise that disability is not caused by the individuals, but by the physical, environmental and attitudinal barriers which exist in the education system and in society as a whole. We use the social model of disability throughout our work. We understand that the definition of disability under the Act is different from eligibility criteria for Special Educational Needs provision. This means disabled pupils may or may not have Special Education Needs.

### **The General Duty**

All public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves more favourable treatment

### **The Specific Duty**

Schools must:

- Publish a Disability Equality Scheme (including within it an Action Plan)
- Involve disabled people in producing the Scheme and Action Plan
- Gather information
- Demonstrate that they have taken actions in the Action Plan and achieved appropriate impact outcomes
- Report on progress annually
- Review and revise the Scheme every 3 years

### **Aims**

Our School aims to be an inclusive school in respect of pupils, parents and visitors. We actually seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual pupils or groups of pupils. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all our children regardless of disability and/or Special Educational Needs.

- We will ensure that pupils with disabilities have the same opportunities as other pupils to benefit from the education our school provides
- We will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than others because of the nature of his or her disability

- We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that a pupil or member of staff with disabilities is not placed at a disadvantage
- We will do our best to anticipate the needs of pupils, staff member or parents with disabilities before he or she joins the school

The production of the Disability Equality Scheme provides us with a framework for integrating disability equality into all aspects of school life.

### **Removing Barriers**

We will continue to make adjustments to ensure pupils; staff members and visitors are not disadvantaged.

Disabilities can limit the extent to which children can access the curriculum and the environment. At Castle we use a variety of strategies to ensure that children are not disadvantaged for example:

- Visual systems of communication - PECS
- Sign language - Makaton
- Visual cues
- Objects of reference

### **The Physical Environment**

We will continue to improve provision for disabled pupils and staff by continuing to develop the physical environments of the school within the limits of the resources available. See Accessibility Plan.

### **The Curriculum**

We use teaching strategies to enhance learning and participation in a broad and balanced curriculum. We find ways in which all pupils can take part in sport, music and drama. We plan our out-of-school activities and school trips in such a way that pupils with disabilities can participate.

We use language that does not offend, and we make staff and pupils aware of the importance of language. Our library, reading books and other resources contain positive images of people with disabilities. The school regularly reviews the way resources are matched to the needs of all the children. If necessary, to improve our provision, adjustments will be made to classroom organisation, the deployment of support staff, timetabling and staff training. Many of the adjustments we make are dependent upon individual needs and we are moving towards more individualised approaches. Individual Education Plans are effective and manageable. We seek and respond to guidance from staff, parents and the children.

### **Information Sharing**

Information normally provided in writing e.g.

- Lesson content
- Text
- Library resources
- School newsletter
- School information

Will be made available in other formats that are clear and user friendly e.g.

- Braille
- Audio tape
- Large print
- In symbol format
- Using ICT systems
- Translated

Information may be shared with parents by telephone if that is more appropriate.

### **Staffing**

When advertising posts, or interviewing applicants or deciding on appointments the Governors and staff will follow the necessary procedures and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

Should a member of staff become disabled, the Governing Body will make reasonable adjustments to that person's employment arrangements or to the premises in order to enable them to continue in post. All members of staff are entitled to professional development and training and are expected to take advantage of a continuous programme of professional development.

This school will liaise with specialists to support individual pupils. Among these specialists are the following:

- Physiotherapists
- Educational Physiotherapists
- Speech Therapists
- Doctors
- School Nurse
- Social workers
- Staff of the voluntary and statutory agencies

We benefit from the LA's advice and its provision through the Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired Services.

## School Accessibility Plan 2017/18

### 1. Accessibility (Premises, Facilities and Accessibility Plan)

- 1.1 Consider, with the Local Authority, the suitability of premises linked to pupil need.
- 1.2 Develop Premises and Facilities plan 2017 - 22 to outline developments to support sustainability and identified growth.
- 1.3 Develop a maintenance plan for 2017 - 22.

### 2. Update School Signage

- 2.1 Consider implications of car park and residents' only car parking outside school.

### 3. Supporting Pupils

- 3.1 Audit of matrix match to pupil need.
- 3.2 Review entrance/exit arrangements for pupils and families.
- 3.3 Review of staffing structure

### 4.0 Staff Recruitment, Training and Appraisal

- 4.1 Development of key areas in development plan:
  - Coaching and mentoring
  - Peer observation
- 4.2 Continue to develop 'Talent Management' for both Teachers and Teaching Assistants.
- 4.3 Consider developing Castle Standards

### 5.0 Curriculum

- 5.1 Continue to develop the curriculum offer across the school.

### 6.0 Our Provision

- 6.1 Consider a change to the structure of the school day

### 7.0 Community Links

- 7.1 Investigate how we support families in the light of further cuts to direct services.