



The Castle Partnership Trust

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Accessibility (Special Needs and Disability) Policy

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Due for review: Spring Term 2025

This policy should be operated in conjunction with the SEND policy.

Purpose

Schools are required under the Equality Act 2010 to have an accessibility plan. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled students can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the schools to enable disabled students to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided
- Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled students

Our Trust aims to treat all its students fairly and with respect. This involves providing access and opportunities for all students without discrimination of any kind.

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DfE) guidance for schools on the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

Schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils with disabilities under the Equality Act 2010, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a disabled student faces in comparison with non-disabled students.

Scope

It is the Trust's agreed policy that adults and students with disabilities (as defined above) are not treated less favourably for a reason that relates to their disability. The Trust has determined that it will make reasonable adjustments in order to create an inclusive environment that promotes an equality of opportunity and removes barriers to learning in every aspect of school life.

The Trust will take "reasonable steps" to ensure that disabled adults, students and prospective students are not placed at a "substantial disadvantage" compared to their peers.

How

The policy applies to the whole Trust community. Each school in the Trust has an action plan which provides detail as to how the policy will be determined, implemented, monitored (success criteria) and the basis on which it will be reviewed.

Responsibility

The Trust Board has the overall responsibility for ensuring that there is compliance with this legislation. The Local Governing Body will have delegated responsibility for monitoring compliance.

Staff

The Trust is an Equal Opportunities employer and will continue to endeavour to appoint the best candidates, regardless of any disability. The Trust will also make reasonable adaptations to retain staff who develop a disability.

Admissions

The Governing Body has determined to make each school as accessible as reasonably practical and to make plans for increasing access and opportunity for students with disabilities.

Accessibility Audits

A physical access audit will be carried out every two years in each school by the relevant Premises Manager in conjunction with the relevant SENCo and the results of the audit will be fed into the review of the SEN and Disability Policy.

Issues identified in any Accessibility Audit are amalgamated into a single action plan which will be fed into the School Development Plans for consideration.

The Accessibility Action Plans will be reviewed at least annually by the Local Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the targets identified.

School Trips

It is the agreed Trust policy that equality of access to school trips should be applied to all students if at all practicable. If applicable, accommodation will be booked to take account of students with a disability. Similarly, transport should be used which allows easy egress/entry for students with a disability. Where possible a teaching assistant will accompany students when deemed necessary. The Trust will aim to provide minibuses with easy-access facilities, such as a side step or lift.

Curricular Issues

Access to the curriculum will take account of students with disabilities. All students are encouraged to take part in music, drama and physical activities. Alternative means are determined, for example in some forms of physical education, to ensure that disabled students gain experience and understanding of the area being covered.

The Trust's statements on differentiation and special educational needs seek to remove barriers to learning and participation. Lessons will be organised to be responsive to student diversity and staff provide lessons in which all students can achieve. There are high expectations for all students.

Classrooms will be organised to maximise access and learning for all disabilities.

Staff (teaching and support) receive information about the law relating to SEN and disabilities. ECTs and teaching assistants receive information on how to implement the Trust's SEN and Disability policy as part of their induction training. Information will also appear in the respective staff handbooks.

Rights of Appeal

The Trust's complaints procedure covers the accessibility plan. If you have any concerns relating to accessibility in any of the Trust's schools, this procedure sets out the process for raising these concerns.