

Congleton High School



Disability Equality

(Part of the Equality & Diversity Scheme)

Foreword

Congleton High School is committed to ensuring disability equality in its service provision and in its responsibility as an employer. This Disability Equality Scheme, which will run from December 2006 to November 2009, sets out how we intend to reinforce this commitment. Each set of outcomes and objectives within the Scheme will be delivered through a series of underpinning actions.

In developing this Scheme we embodied the principles and values in the Disability Rights Commission's social model of disability:

'Disabled people do not face disadvantage because of their impairments but experience discrimination in the way we organise society. This includes failing to make education, work, leisure, and public services accessible, failing to remove barriers of assumption, stereotype and prejudice and failing to outlaw unfair treatment in our daily lives'

Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, places a statutory General Duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. The 2005 Act provides an increasingly robust legislative framework which requires school's to actively promote disability equality. In developing this Scheme we have considered how best to improve the quality, accessibility and responsiveness of all our school for all disabled people. Specifically, we have taken into account the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Promote positive attitudes towards disability
- Eliminate harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

Congleton High School recognises that promoting equality will improve the quality of school life for everyone. Our aim, therefore, is to make equality a central part of the way the school works by putting it at the centre of policy making, service delivery, regulation and enforcement, and employment practice.

What are we intending to achieve with this Scheme?

Congleton High School's Disability Equality Scheme is a further demonstration of our commitment to promoting good equalities practices and ensures that we will meet the needs of our disabled students, staff and other users. This Scheme sets out our overall objectives for improving and addressing disability inequalities and the action plans for delivering improvements to access and service quality. The Scheme will help us to achieve a number of things:

- To meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and set out our plans to improve disability access to employment and services
- Ensure that we are taking the needs and view of disabled people into account when we design or deliver services, make access improvements or develop policies
- Continuously monitor and improve the ways in which we deliver services to disabled people

Congleton High School's disabled population

As the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) observe, there is no single or 'gold standard' measure or estimate of disability. As equalities monitoring of disabled people, especially using the Disability Discrimination Act definition, is not widely carried out, we must rely on indicative data: A key challenge for the school is to establish the diverse range of needs of people who have different types and levels of disability.

Staff

Number considered to be disabled 1
Percentage 0.8%

Students

Year group	Number	Percentage
7	11	6.2%
8	5	2.3%
9	8	4.5%
10	6	3.3%
11	5	2.9%
Sixth	11	7.7%

Communicating the Disability Equality Scheme

Disability equality means different things to different people. Disability occurs because barriers hinder disabled people from taking a full part in the community. This is the social model of disability and is defined as;

“the recognition that primarily it is the loss or limitation of opportunities, due to environmental and social barriers, that prevents people who have impairments from participating in society on an equal level with others.”

This Disability Equality Scheme clarifies Congleton High School's approach to tackling disability discrimination. It is vital that all staff in the school adopt the same approach and form a common understanding of the social model. This Scheme outlines the work that will be needed to develop this common understanding and our approach to customer care and service provision.

Congleton High School's commitment to disability equality

Congleton High School recognises that although inequality, disadvantage and discrimination exist in society, its aim is to ensure that no one who deals with the school in any capacity receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of: age, race, ethnicity, religion, marital status, gender, sexual orientation or physical or mental impairment.

We intend to focus on a number of specific areas in order to ensure that we provide:

- High quality education but take into account people's different needs and respond positively to meeting them;
- Equal access to services so that people are better able to outline their needs and are not disadvantaged in any way;
- Equality in employment opportunities for people from minority groups; and
- Learning and development opportunities for all staff.

Consultation, Engagement and Influence

We recognise that the involvement of disabled people and staff in shaping this Disability Equality Scheme will be a critical factor in determining its long-term success. Therefore, we see consultation as a continuous and long-term objective.

We have consulted with all user groups through the form of an anonymous questionnaire. Results from this have resulted in further investigations. We have also discussed issues with a variety of user groups.

Our objectives

This Scheme sets out the framework within which Congleton High School intends to promote equality for, and prevent discrimination against, ALL disabled people.

Objective 1 – We will promote equality for disabled people by:

- Removing barriers to access, particularly in relation to education and employment and access to services, information and buildings

Objective 2 – We will tackle discrimination against disabled people by:

- Promoting positive images of disabled people

- Challenging patronising or discriminating attitudes and behaviours
- Making the environment as safe as possible for disabled people
- Challenging anti-social behaviour against, or harassment of, disabled people
- Involving disability groups in our PHSE curriculum
- Year group assemblies
-

Objective 3 – We will support disabled people to achieve their full potential by:

- Providing necessary support, assistance and care to disabled people to enable them to fulfill their potential
- Supporting disabled people according to their individual need

Objective 4 – We will work in partnership with disabled people by:

- Enabling disabled people's active participation in shaping the school future
- Involving disabled people in the changes and improvements we make
- Consulting with directly disabled people on issues affecting them and not just with people acting on their behalf

Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

Objective 1 – We will promote equality for disabled people by:

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale
Improve access to site	Improve signage around the site	New signage in place	2008
	Redevelop the front entrance to school to ease disabled access	New entrance system in place	2010
Improve facilities for disabled users	Provide Science facilities for disabled users	Furniture and equipment in place	As required
	Provide Science facilities for disabled users	Furniture and equipment in place	As required

Objective 2 – We will tackle discrimination against disabled people by:

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale
Promote a positive attitude towards disability	Ensure disability is considered as part of the PHSE and citizenship curricula	Schemes of work reflect the needs of disabled people	2007 onwards
	Involve disability groups in the presentation of assemblies	Disability groups present assemblies	2007 onwards

Objective 3 – We will support disabled people to achieve their full potential by:

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale
Supporting students with disabilities	Produced literature in suitable format for students and other users with disabilities	Suitable literature produced	2007 onwards
	Improve the links between the XL team and other staff	Students and parents content with support received	Sept 2007
	Monitor and review the curriculum provided at each Key Stage ensuring it fulfils the individual needs of disabled users.	Curriculum model suitable for all users	2007 onwards

Objective 4 – We will work in partnership with disabled people by:

Objective	Action	Outcome	Timescale
Ensuring partnership with disabled people	Provide necessary information to all disabled users	All identified information circulated	2007 onwards
Involving disabled people in decision making	Ensure all decisions are referred to disabled groups	Ensure disabled groups are represented on decision making bodies	2007 onwards

Appendices

The Disability Discrimination Act DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

What the Act means by disability

Disability is defined as

“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.”

Explanations of:

Impairment

The definition covers physical and mental impairments. These include:

- physical impairments affecting the senses, such as sight and hearing
- mental impairments including learning disabilities and mental illness (if it is recognised by a respected body of medical opinion)

Substantial

For an effect to be substantial, it must be more than minor.

The following are examples that are likely to be considered substantial:

- inability to see moving traffic clearly enough to cross a road safely
- inability to turn taps or knobs
- inability to remember and relay a simple message correctly.

Long-term

These are effects that

- have lasted at least 12 months

or

- are likely to last at least 12 months

or

- are likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected

Long-term effects include those which are likely to recur. For example, an effect will be considered to be long-term if it is likely both to recur, and to do so at least once beyond the 12-month period following the first occurrence.

Day-to-day activities

Day-to-day activities are normal activities carried out by most people on a regular basis, and must involve one of the following broad categories

- mobility - moving from place to place
- manual dexterity - for example, use of the hands
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- the ability to lift, carry or move ordinary objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory, or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- being able to recognise physical danger

The Government has issued guidance, under the Act, about whether an impairment has a substantial or long-term effect. This guidance does not in itself impose legal obligations on an employer or service provider, but a tribunal or court must when considering a complaint about discrimination take into account any of the guidance which appears to be relevant.

Particular cases or conditions:

Severe disfigurements

The Act's definition treats severe disfigurements as disabilities, although they have no effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

If, however, the disfigurement consists of a tattoo which has not been removed, non-medical body piercing, or an object attached through such a piercing, regulations have the effect of ensuring that this would not be treated as a disability.

Impairments helped by treatment or artificial aids

Medication or equipment (such as an artificial limb) which helps an impairment is not taken into account when considering whether an impairment has a substantial effect.

For example, a person who wears a hearing aid to improve their hearing is considered to have the hearing loss that would exist without the use of the aid. An exception is when people wear glasses or contact lenses - it is the effect on the person's vision, while wearing their glasses or contact lenses, that is considered.

If, however, the treatment is likely to cure the impairment, this should be taken into account in assessing whether the impairment is long-term.

Progressive conditions

The Act covers progressive conditions where impairments are likely to become substantial. Examples of progressive conditions include

- cancer
- HIV infection
- multiple sclerosis
- muscular dystrophy

The Act covers people with these conditions from the moment that there is a noticeable effect on normal day-to-day activities, however slight.

For example, a person with multiple sclerosis would be covered from the time they first developed symptoms that affect their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. They would not be covered just because the illness had been diagnosed.

Genetic predispositions

The Act does not cover people with a gene that causes a disability unless they develop the disability. For example, people with the gene that causes Huntington's chorea are not covered if they do not have the condition. People are covered as soon as the first effects on normal day-to-day activities appear.

Past disabilities

The definition covers people who have had a disability in the past. If a person once had a disability which is covered by the Act, they are still protected if they have recovered. This applies even if they recovered before the Act came into force.

Registered disabled people

Any person registered as a disabled person under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944, or the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (Northern Ireland) 1945, on both

- 12 January 1995 when the legislation was first introduced into Parliament
- and the date when the employment rights start is covered by the Act for three years

is to be treated as having a disability, for the purposes of the Act, for three years from the latter date. They do not have to prove they meet the new definition of disability for this three-year period.

Babies and children under the age of six

It may be difficult to see the effects of an impairment on a baby or young child and thus determine if he or she is disabled. However, a young child with an impairment will be treated as disabled under the Act if someone over the age of six with such an impairment would normally be covered by the Act.

Impairments which are excluded

The following conditions are not to be treated as impairments for the purposes of the Act

- Addiction to or dependency on alcohol, nicotine or any other substance (unless the addiction resulted from the substance being medically prescribed).
- Seasonal allergic rhinitis (e.g. hay fever) except where it aggravates the effect of another condition.
- A tendency to set fires.
- A tendency to steal.
- A tendency to physical or sexual abuse of others.
- Exhibitionism
- Voyeurism

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