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## DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY AND ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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Committee:	Teaching and Learning
Recommended by the Committee	On 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2024
Approved by FGB:	On 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
Date of next review:	March 2025
Responsible Officer:	E Oakley-Pullen – SENDCo

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*This policy should be read alongside the SEND policy and the Annual SEND information report*

### The College profile

Comberton Village College enjoys a position as a thriving, successful, over-subscribed fully comprehensive community school. The college is committed to fulfilling the full positive potential of every pupil and caters for the widest possible spread of abilities. While the college successfully meets the demands of stretching a higher-than-average proportion of more able pupils, it also meets the needs of many pupils with SEND, often drawn by an excellent reputation for a caring and effective approach to Special Needs and Disabilities education. The proportion of pupils with special needs therefore falls only slightly below the national average and the number of students with EHCPs is higher than average. At Easter 2007 the College opened an on-site provision for pupils with high functioning autism called The Cabin. This is now housed in a purpose-built provision opened in September 2015. As of July 2023, around 20% of pupils at the school have disabilities as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act. The national average for academies is around 12%.

### Our Vision

Comberton Village College aims to develop the full positive potential of every individual pupil in its care, including all pupils with disabilities. These aims are fully expressed in the school document 'Aims and Values'. The College is likewise committed to equality of opportunity for all its stakeholders with disability; this includes staff, Governors and all visitors to the school.

All staff have been briefed on the college Disability Equality Scheme and Accessibility Plan. The College is involved in a continuous process of research into how all stakeholders perceive its attitude to disability.

### The Law

In October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 (The Act) consolidated all previous equality legislation, replacing the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). It introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty. In carrying out our functions, this requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

- ✓ not treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
- ✓ make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage;
- ✓ plan to increase access to education for disabled pupils.

Comberton Village College welcomes this duty and is committed to meeting it comprehensively. Additionally, the Act includes a duty for schools to implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- ✓ increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- ✓ improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- ✓ improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

### Definition of disability

The Act defines a disabled person as someone who has ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’ ‘Substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’, and ‘long term’ as lasting, or likely to last, longer than 12 months. Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments; mental health conditions; specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia; global learning difficulties; chronic health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, ME and back pain; ADHD; and autism. This definition is broad and includes children with a wide range of impairments.

This plan sets out the proposals of the Governing Body of the school to increase access to education for disabled pupils in the three areas required by the planning duties in the Act:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum;
- improving the environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services;
- improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is provided in writing for pupils who are not disabled.

### Comberton Village College: Accessibility Plan 2023-4

As of July 2023, approximately 20% pupils at the school may meet the legal definition of disability.

Further Action Required	Intended Outcome	Personnel	Complete by
Keep website information on provision for people with disabilities at CVC up to date and to increase the accessibility of this.	Continually improve access to information. Provide alternative access methods for families who themselves may have a disability	EOP (SENDCo)	Ongoing
Research relevant children in future intakes: An increase in children with EHCPs is expected every year.	Effective forward planning, smooth transitions.	IO/JH/EOP + relevant year group coordinators	Ongoing
Monitoring of children suffering from seizures continues. Provide annual staff training to key staff and first aiders.	Ensure children’s safety: consideration of access to education, especially extra-curricular activities.	SWP/Community school nurse	Ongoing
Research any local / national trends that may be relevant.	Plan for the future	JH/EOP	Ongoing
Continue education for staff on inclusion matters for pupils who have a disability as required	Continued professional development	Overseen EOP/JH	Ongoing
Monitor disabled pupils’ participation in school life, to include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation of pupils in extra-curricular activities</li><li>• Off -site activities</li></ul>	Gauge extent to which disabled pupils are able to participate in life of school	Overseen EOP/JH	Ongoing

## Increasing the extent to which pupils who have a disability can participate in the school curriculum and the wider life of the school.

The National Curriculum states that an inclusive curriculum must:

- 1) *set suitable learning challenges*
- 2) *respond to pupils' diverse learning needs*
- 3) *Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils*

CVC conforms with this requirement. No pupils are denied access to any part of the school curriculum due to disability. The school has an excellent reputation locally for meeting the special educational needs of all pupils, including those with disabilities. The Centre (for pupils with special educational needs) is well staffed with highly qualified and experienced TAs. Detailed information, regularly updated, on the special needs of all pupils is provided to teachers of individual pupils, along with specialist support where possible and appropriate.

The Cabin, is the specialist provision for pupils with ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition). The aim is for these pupils to be as fully included as possible in every aspect of school life. They are supported in The Cabin by a specially trained team of teachers, Communication Support Specialists and specialized TA's. These members of staff regularly communicate with classroom teachers to ensure that their needs are met within the classroom.

Pupils who have a disability are encouraged to participate as fully in off-site activities as their disability will allow. An established procedure is in place for carrying out risk assessments on those pupils who might have an impact on the health and safety of the school community, to ensure maximum safe access to the curriculum for all.

- Every effort is made to offer extra-curricular activities to children with a disability and only in rare circumstances does the nature of a disability preclude the child's participation in a given activity. Some funding for extra support is available from the LA on a case-by-case basis, for activities such as school visits that form part of the curriculum. Additional funding is routinely sought to support participation in activities for children with disabilities, including the writing of identified needs on annual EHCP review forms. Parents are encouraged to use their Disability Allowance to fund one-to-one support if required through a risk assessment for extra-curricular activities such as social trips which the school are unable to fund support for.
- Site access including issues of braille signage has been improved and is on-going for VI users.
- A disability-adapted minibus has been purchased and is in use.
- The Centre has access to a hoist and facilities for provision of physiotherapy improved. There is also a disabled toilet and space for getting changed.
- Rooms on the first floor are accessible via lift.
- High backed stools are available for those who need them in subjects where they would ordinarily have stools.
- Most pupils who have a disability are successfully integrated in social activities of Year groups, e.g. attendance at Residential activities (Beaumanor Year7), Spanglovision, discos etc. For those who need 1:1 support see above
- The School's Positive Behaviour Policy has been amended to allow reasonable adjustment for pupils with a disability.

## Ways in which school organisation impacts on disabled pupils

Information on pupils with disabilities is readily available to staff via the SEND register produced by the SENCO in conjunction with the school nurse, with information also on Bromcom including strategy sheets. The school is organised such that no pupil with disability is denied access to the school-based curriculum due to timetabling constraints. Rooming is allocated carefully to ensure pupils with physical disabilities can access appropriate classrooms with lift access to non-ground floor rooms.

The school employs a full-time nurse.

The school operates a strict anti-bullying policy which covers the bullying of pupils with disabilities; action is taken in all reported cases.

A policy on Managing Medicines in School has been written by SWP and has been ratified by Governors. Students with medical needs have Healthcare Plans written by SWP

Further Action Required	Intended outcome	Personnel	Complete
Continue to work with the whole school on raising awareness and tolerance of pupils with disabilities	Education and increased tolerance of difference among mainstream pupils	JH, EOP Liaise with SaN	Ongoing

#### Physical access to the school site

##### Wheelchair users:

The whole site apart from the Performance Hall Gallery and first floor of the Cabin is accessible to wheelchair users. The Humanities block buildings are fully compliant with Disability Regulations – the lift can be used in the event of fire or a power cut, with battery backup.

There are 4 access toilets which are spread out around the college and signage on these has been improved. There is labelled disabled parking spaces outside the main entrance and taxis bringing wheelchair users to the college have room to park. Evacuation chairs have been fitted at stairwells in the 3 main buildings.

##### Visually Impaired users:

The college was helped by the Visual Impairment service to audit the site for visually impaired users in January 2010 with a number of students both past and present who have been registered blind. Coloured lines are painted at the edge of steps. Potential hazards are highlighted to be more visible. A handrail has been installed on the library stairs. Signage has been assessed and audited and braille signs have been installed on all doors to include braille. The provision for VI pupils was formally reviewed by the Local Authority specialist VI team in May 2019. The provision at Comberton Village College was found to be good, with a small number of improvements suggested regarding clearer communication. Meeting schedules have been changed to adopt these improvement suggestions.

##### Hearing impaired users:

Hearing impaired students store equipment in The Centre and use radio aids where appropriate. HI students receive monitoring visits from qualified teachers of the Deaf and reports are shared with parents, pupils and staff on best practice for supporting these pupils.

#### Outcomes for pupils who have a disability

A questionnaire is sent to parents of all new children on the disability register in November, asking their views on how effectively their children's needs are met at CVC.

Action	Intended Outcome	Personnel	Complete by
Update details of attendance and exclusion for pupils who have a disability and review.	To ensure there are no patterns pertaining to issues of disability.	EOP	Annually, in July
Work with Local Authority groups where appropriate	Advertise events giving information and advice for parents of PWD	EOP	On-going

Analyse outcome data for pupils with a disability: A Levels, GCSE , key Stage 3, other accredited courses – in liaison with Jamie Freeman	Use findings to identify strengths and weaknesses of current academic provision for PWD	IO/EOP	Ongoing – included in Centre and Sixth Form SEF
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### Management, coordination and implementation of the Accessibility Plan

The Planning Committee of the governing body is responsible for the school Accessibility Plan. The school DES group will continue to meet regularly with Governor representation and reporting the progress of the DES will be an agenda item in the full Governors’ meeting in the summer term.

### Support for staff

Applicants for new roles in school are asked to complete a questionnaire outlining any disabilities they may have and their suitability for the role, in accordance with safer recruiting policies. If appointed, the school will make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act (2010) to enable the staff member to fulfill their role.

If an existing member of staff’s disability status changes, they are supported through HR. Advice may be sought from Occupational Health on reasonable adjustments that can be made to enable the member of staff to continue in their role as long as they are safe to do so.

### Support to visitors on site

As detailed above, the site is largely accessible to most people. This extends to visitors on site and there is disabled parking available. Visitors are welcome to inform the person they are visiting of any specific needs and reasonable adjustments will be made.



*This policy incorporates elements of Article 1 (Definition of a Child), Article 2 (Non-Discrimination), Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child), Article 4 (Making Rights Real), Article 23 (Children with Disabilities) and Article 28 (Access to Education), from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*