

DISABILITY & EQUALITY POLICY



ST MARY'S COLLEGE

Our Mission

***"Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength
and love your neighbour as you love yourself"***
(Mk 12:30-31)

St Mary's College exists to help parents and carers to educate young people spiritually, morally, physically and academically as well as possible.

We aim to be a truly Christian community, where our relationships are built on encouragement, concern, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

Date policy produced: April 2010

Produced by: St Mary's College

Date policy reviewed: review approved November 2021

Reviewed by: M Stead, Head of School

Introduction

At St Mary's College we are committed to equality of opportunity in all areas, including our general responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people;
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Equality Act;
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their impairments;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- To take account of a disabled person's impairments, even where that involves treating the disabled person more favourably than other people.

This policy sets out the steps the Directors will take that will result in improved outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers and staff in all aspects of school life.

School Mission Statement, Vision & Values.

The mission statement of St Mary's College is at the heart of all that we do in the school and is stated above.

School Values

At St Mary's College we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and all those receiving services from the school. In line with our mission statement, we aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. Our admissions policy does not discriminate against disabled pupils.

The achievement of disabled pupils is monitored and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. We will not tolerate harassment of disabled people with any form of impairment.

This school uses the "social model" of disability as the basis for its work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people. This model says that it is the world and society that creates barriers that limit or prevent disabled people from enjoying the same opportunities as people who are not disabled.

Our Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy states 'everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and the Directors seek to ensure that the principles of fairness and equality of opportunity underpin all its policies, procedures and practices'.

Definition of Disability

The Equality Act 2010 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'. The definition is designed to be as broad as possible.

Physical or mental impairment can include:

- Physical impairments such as mobility difficulties
- Sensory impairments such as those affecting hearing or sight
- Learning difficulties including people with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
- Mental health condition or illnesses which have a long-term effect such as depression and anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder
- Genetic and progressive conditions (if the condition affects your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy
- Conditions which are characterised by a number of cumulative effects such as pain or fatigue
- Hidden impairments such as asthma or diabetes (if these have an effect on day-to-day activities)
- Past history of impairment – this applies if you are no longer disabled but met the definition in the past.

Some impairments automatically meet the definition from the point of diagnosis. These are cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis. People registered as blind or partially sighted are also automatically regarded as disabled under the Act.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of age, gender reassignment, sex (i.e. male or female), race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships and disability.

Disability Equality in Education (DEE) recommends that all pupils with SEN and those with long term medical needs be treated as disabled for the purposes of the Act and for equality. This is in addition to all pupils with long-term impairments, which have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities.

Disabled staff:

We request all staff inform the head of school and HR of any disability they have and the impact this has on their normal work duties.

Pupil Achievement:

As well as the SEN Register, there is a central medical register, which contains details of all students who may have a disability, but no SEN.

- Progress data is analysed by category of need.
- Where data indicates that appropriate progress is not being made by any individual, cohort or categories, suitable intervention strategies are implemented.
- Great importance is placed on ensuring every child in the school reaches their full potential and has the opportunity to do so.

External Agencies

St Mary's College works closely with a wide range of external agencies in support of our children and staff with a disability.

These include:

- IPASS
- Physiotherapy Services
- The NHS Diabetes Team
- Wheelchair service
- A designated school nurse
- Turn 2 Us
- Refresh
- CAMHS
- Headstart
- Rainbows
- The Virtual School
- Educational Psychologists
- Clinical Psychologists
- Autism Outreach
- Music Therapy
- SALT
- Connexions

Learning Opportunities:

- Core group provision is offered for children with the most profound barriers to their learning in Years 7 & 8.
- Off -site provision is made available for a number of pupils in KS4.
- Early interventions are made for all pupils who are underachieving in KS3 (see SEN Policy)
- St Mary's College has a pastoral system to support all individual pupils with their Learning and Achievement.

Admissions, Transitions, Exclusions:

- St Mary's College has a significant number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan which represents a significant proportion of all such pupils within the LA (and the proportion is growing).
- All Primary schools are visited and significant data on all children is collected. Individual meetings are held with the SENCo of each primary school to establish the precise needs of all appropriate pupils.
- Connexions are involved in all Annual Reviews from year 9 onwards. In addition, all pupils in school have Connexions interviews from year 10 onwards.

- The school's 6th form encourages pupils with disabilities to apply for a suitable course and the 6th form
- Children with disabilities are not over-represented in our exclusion figures.

Social Relationships:

The school runs a large number of lunchtime activities for all students. Students who struggle socially are encouraged to join as many clubs as possible and the Pastoral teams will guide pupils as appropriate, sometimes on a daily basis.

We run an Inclusion Sports Club twice a week and have a qualified colleague who delivers the Friendship Formula Programme.

Employing, Promoting and Training Disabled Staff:

The school monitors its workforce and the number of staff who have declared a disability.

How we will assess the impact of our policies?

The school has a formal system for assessing and monitoring the impact of these policies.

We recognise that all our school's policies may have an impact on the participation and outcomes for disabled pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the local community.