

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

This scheme links with the following policies:

- Anti-Bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety

Date of Latest Review:	April 2012
Next Review Date:	Under review
Policy Available for Staff at:	Staff drive
Policy Available for Parents at:	Main Office
Headteacher:	Ms M Roberts

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

St Joseph's College is committed to fostering an inclusive community which encourages students and staff to fulfil their potential and which values every individual for their unique contribution to the success of the college.

The college welcomes people with disabilities and will comply with the requirements of the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 95), the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA 01), and the Disability Equality Duty 2005 (DDA 05). The college will make all reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of individual students, parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders.

The Disability Discrimination Act defines disability as:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long term (at least a year) and adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities." (DDA 95)

Definition of Terms:

- **'Physical impairment'** includes sensory impairments
- **'Mental impairment'** includes learning difficulties and an impairment resulting from or consisting of a mental illness.
- **'Substantial'** means 'more than minor or trivial'.
- **'Long term'** is defined as 12 months or more.

The College recognises under the Data Protection Act that all students are entitled to complete confidentiality when disclosing a disability. However, the college would wish for appropriate disclosure in order to implement any provision for the students to support them and their needs.

ACCESSIBILITY

All schools were required by the SEN and Disability Act (2001) to develop accessibility plans. The development of the plans required schools to undertake an audit focusing on three aspects:

- 1. Developing participation in the curriculum for students with disabilities**
- 2. Developing physical access to the school environment and buildings**
- 3. Improving access to information for parents and pupils with disabilities**

The DES (Disability Equality Scheme) merges with the accessibility plan in light of the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty 2005 and is reviewed by the College and its Governing Body every three years. Any recommendations from the review will inform the Action Plan for the following review cycle.

THE DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY 2005

The DDA 2005 brought in a duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. The duty includes two main elements:

- 1. A general duty**
- 2. A specific duty**

THE GENERAL DUTY

The College, when carrying out its functions, will have due regard to the need to:

- 1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people**
- 2. eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA**
- 3. eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability**
- 4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people**
- 5. encourage participation by disabled people in public life**
- 6. take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment**

The duty will apply across the college's duties to:

- 1. disabled students**
- 2. disabled staff**
- 3. disabled parents, carers and other users of the college**

THE SPECIFIC DUTY

In addition to the General Duty, regulations made under part 5A of the DDA, set out a specific duty on certain public authorities, including all publically funded schools, requiring them to demonstrate how they are meeting the General Duty. In effect, the General Duty sets out what the College is going to do, and the specific duty sets out how the College is going to do it and what will be recorded as evidence of what has been done.

THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Under the requirements of the Specific Duty, the College will:

- 1. prepare and publish a Disability Equality Scheme.**
- 2. involve disabled people in the development of the scheme**
- 3. implement the scheme**
- 4. report on the scheme**

The purpose of the scheme is to demonstrate how the college is going to meet the Disability Equality Duty. However, the College is not required to do anything under its scheme that is unreasonable or impracticable.

Schools are required to undertake the development of their scheme in a particular way and to include particular elements. In line with this requirement, the college will:

- 1. involve disabled people (students, staff, stakeholders) in the preparation of the scheme**
- 2. set out in the scheme how disabled people have been involved in its preparation**
- 3. set out the arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the College's policies on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees**
- 4. list the educational opportunities available to and the achievements of disabled students**
- 5. show the College's methods for assessing the impact of its current or proposed policies and practices on disability equality**
- 6. list the steps the College is going to take to meet the General Duty**
- 7. show the arrangements for using information to support the review of the College's Disability and Accessibility Action Plan and to inform subsequent schemes.**

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE INCLUSIVE APPROACH

The College will strive to meet the needs of all individuals, staff and other stakeholders by ensuring they have access to appropriate facilities, support and learning resources including staff. The College will achieve equality of opportunity by ensuring the following:

- **Provision for learners with disabilities will be linked to the Equal Opportunities Policy.**
- **The College will identify its disabled pupils, staff and other stakeholders in order to consider their voice in the implementation of the scheme.**
- **The College will ensure it gathers information from stakeholders who are disabled in order to improve outcomes for students, staff and parents.**
- **The College will ensure that future building programmes will comply with legislation and ensure that buildings are accessible and meet the varying needs of those with disabilities: learners, staff, parents and other stakeholders. This may be set out in a phased programme to improve and upgrade existing provision. This will be detailed in the college's DDA / Accessibility Action Plan that is reviewed on a 3 year cycle.**
- **The College will ensure that future building programmes will evaluate sanitary facilities in line with the intended use of the building.**
- **The Safeguarding Committee audit the site (and proposed sites) annually, or as necessary, in order for preparations to be made in advance for any student / member of staff who requires reasonable adjustment due to disability.**
- **The College will continue to liaise with external agencies to promote inclusive learning and access to learning opportunities.**
- **Promotional and publicity material will reflect the positive image that the College is accessible to all irrespective of their disabilities.**
- **The College transition procedure will give potential students the opportunity to register a disability in order that the college can make appropriate arrangements to meet the individual need.**
- **Counselling and guidance will be made available to all students with the option of referral by the Inclusion Manager, for specific inter-agency support if necessary.**
- **The College will continue to raise the awareness of staff of the DES and its consequent implementation into college life.**
- **The College will provide specialist support and training for staff involved in teaching students with disabilities where the need arises.**
- **The College will ensure that Health and Safety legislation is taken into account and special measures are taken so to not compromise the health and safety of learners, parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders.**
- **The College will arrange specialist support where necessary depending on the individual's need.**

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include but are not restricted to:

- Communication: signer or Braille
- Access Arrangements for examinations
- Equipment and technology: sound field systems.
- Physical equipment: food preparation boards, specialist PE equipment, sloping desks.
- Large PC screens or specialist software.
- Personalised approach to the curriculum.
- Adjustments to the college site: sanitary provision, handrails, lighting, signage.

The College recognises that to provide the best possible support it will require specialist guidance and so will closely liaise with Social Services, SEND, Educational Psychologists and other support agencies.

The College will enable all students to sit examinations that are appropriate to their curriculum and will, with discussion, provide and reasonable specialist support required to do so. Permission from Exam Boards is required so advanced applications are essential.

Examination boards permit access arrangements for clearly defined disabilities. These include:

- **Physical disability**
- **Sensory impairment**
- **Specific Learning difficulties (depending on severity)**
- **Mental health difficulties.**

Access arrangements for students with temporary disabilities can be made at the time of the examination.

REVIEWING THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

As part of the review of the scheme, we will:

- Re-visit the information that was used to identify the priorities for the action plan and assess the impact on outcomes and opportunities for disabled pupils, staff and parents.

The review process will continue to:

- Involve disabled pupils, staff, parents and other stakeholders.
- Be based on information gathered by the college about our priorities.

The college welcomes comments to enable us to provide the best possible support for all students, staff and other stakeholders.

Review Date: April 2015

Head teacher:

Chair of Governors:

Review Date: April 2015

Headteacher: _____

Chair of Governors: _____