



St Matthew Academy

ACCESS POLICY & DISABILITY STATEMENT

Our motto is 'Let your light shine'. It is taken from St Matthew's Gospel and captures our belief in the uniqueness of each individual. Our aim is to ensure that the talents and strengths of each pupil are encouraged, developed and celebrated

Successful, confident learners

High expectations, outstanding achievements

Inclusive, caring, Catholic community

Nurturing talent, cultivating ambition

Excellence for all

Date of Approval	Summer 2018 (TBC)
Review Date	Summer 2020

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement. The Academy will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join the Academy community as pupils and staff.
- 1.2 The Academy has been designed and built to have provision and accessibility for people with disabilities so that they may be integrated fully into Academy life. The curriculum will be designed so that it may be delivered to provide flexible and equal access to all pupils whether able or disabled as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment.

2 Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this statement are to ensure that:
- i applications for admission from all potential pupils are considered in line with the published admission arrangements;
 - ii applications for employment are considered and assessed on the basis of the applicants' aptitudes, abilities and qualifications;
 - iii disabled staff and pupils have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of the Academy;
 - iv the views of individual pupils or staff are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed;
 - v all pupils are fully integrated into the Academy and individual needs are assessed and supported as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment;
 - vi staff working with disabled people, either as colleagues or as pupils, have appropriate information, support and training;
 - vii the Academy takes steps to enable staff and pupils who become disabled during their time at the Academy to continue in their chosen career or course of study as far as is practicable;
 - viii disabled members of the public can fully participate in public events held within the Academy;
 - ix so far as is reasonably practicable, the Academy premises are accessible and safe for disabled people; and
 - x no disabled pupil or staff member is treated less favourably as a result of their disability.

3 Implementation

- 3.1 The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are made aware of this policy and that the Disability Code of Practice set out below is followed. (Throughout this policy, the term “parents” means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)
- 3.2 The Head of School and the Governing Body will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy statement is implemented.

4 Disability Code of Practice

Environment

- 4.1 Any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities.
- 4.2 Evacuation procedures and escape routes for pupils and staff with disabilities will be carefully planned and published.

Pupils

- 4.3 Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all pupils. An applicant’s disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into the Academy unless:
- i the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the pupil would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
 - ii the Academy would be unable to provide suitably trained staff or facilities to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met.
- 4.4 The Academy will aim to provide pupils with a disability with the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated. The Academy will not treat a pupil with a disability less favourably than any other pupil and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration of disabled pupils.
- 4.5 As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled pupils will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a disabled pupil cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.
- 4.6 Pupils with a disability or who become disabled whilst studying at the Academy will be given appropriate support from staff to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the SENCo and an Individual Education Plan drawn up on an annual basis.
- 4.7 The Academy recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable pupils with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such pupils to perform to the best of their ability by meeting their individual needs. The Academy will liaise with the relevant Examination

Boards in such instances. Pupils and parents will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENCo in liaison with specific curriculum area managers and the Academy's Examinations Officer.

Staff

- 4.8 Wherever practicable, the Academy will:
- i consider and seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with the Equality Act (2010) (see References section below)
 - ii ensure that employees with disabilities are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications.
 - iii ensure that disabled employees are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed-term contracts is being considered.
- 4.9 Members of staff who become disabled, so far as is practicable, should continue to remain employed by the Academy at the discretion of the Head of School and Governing Body, dependant on their ability to carry out the duties of their post. Help from related professional organisations should be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status or financial loss.
- 4.10 The Academy will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in post. However, options might include:
- i continuing in the same post
 - ii a gradual return to work
 - iii a reduction in hours
 - iv redeployment
 - v premature retirement on grounds of incapacity
 - vi termination of employment.
- 4.11 In cases where a disability is a degenerative, progressive condition that develops over time, careful consideration should be given to the selection of the most appropriate option(s).
- 4.12 The Academy will make reasonable changes to work practices and, where possible, the workplace to enable disabled people to work successfully, including those members of staff who become disabled whilst employed.
- 4.13 The Academy will ensure that a programme of training is offered to staff to increase their awareness of pupils with disabilities and inform them of appropriate action to be taken when delivering the curriculum. Teaching assistants will support teaching staff as required to help ensure that disabled pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 5.1 The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

References

The general definition of disability for the purposes of the Act is 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. The Act defines long-term in this context as having lasted, or being likely to last for at least 12 months or the rest of the person's life. Substantial is defined as more than minor or trivial. Some people are deemed to be disabled for the purposes of the Act. For example, people with cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis are protected effectively from the point of diagnosis.

The Act does not list the sorts of adjustments that you might have to make, but examples might be:

- i. providing recruitment literature in large print;
- ii. providing in interview situations extra equipment at reasonable cost, removing movable barriers like furniture, or holding the interview in a different, wheelchair accessible room;
- iii. allowing a guide or hearing dog into the workplace;
- iv. purchasing specialist equipment, such as an ergonomic chair;
- v. discounting disability-related sickness leave for the purposes of absence management;
- vi. providing additional supervisory guidance / support;
- vii. including a disabled parking space in the car park;
- viii. allowing different start and end times to the working day.

Further information can be obtained from:

- i Citizens Advice
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/education/discrimination-in-education/overview-of-discrimination-in-education/>
- ii the Employment Service
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>
- iii Equality and Human Rights Commission
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>