



Equality & Accessibility Policy

Reviewed March 2020

1. **AIMS**

- 1.1 To be a Catholic school where all members of the community live according to Gospel values and the principles and teachings of Mary Ward, promoting the virtues of freedom, sincerity, justice, truth and joy, to allow all members of the community to feel secure and able to work and live in an atmosphere of courtesy and respect.
- 1.2 The Governors seek to ensure that the values of Mary Ward are reflected in the planning and delivery of all policies. The principle values covered by this policy are:
 - Sincerity – Mary Ward said “We should be such as we appear and appear such as we are.” This policy aims to encourage the whole community to respect individual differences and show compassion to all.
 - Freedom – This policy aims to enable everyone to enjoy, and benefit from, the Loreto experience which celebrates the diversity of individuals.
- 1.3 To create a caring and stable environment, in which each person is respected as an individual with unique gifts, talents and ambitions, and is given the freedom and confidence to develop these.

2. **INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This policy accords with national legislation and the equal opportunity policy of the Diocese of Westminster. It is a general statement of the school’s commitment to Equal Opportunities, but includes specific references to the duties outlined in legislation for racial equality, gender equality and disability equality. It further reminds us of our statutory duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equal opportunities between all people.
- 2.2 Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:
 - 2.2.1 **The uniqueness of the individual:**
We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God’s image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.
 - 2.2.2 **The search for excellence:**
We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community which flows from diversity of age, gender, racial and social origins, abilities, culture and religion. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.
 - 2.2.3 **The education of the whole person:**
We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions

we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identify and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

2.2.4 **The education of all:**

We have the duty to care for all, with preferential consideration for the poor, and to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.

2.2.5 **Moral principles:**

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

2.2.6 Consequently, we strive to ensure that:

- we promote understanding of and respect for others whatever their ability, race, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, age, religion, social background or beliefs, gender reassignment or maternity;
- we promote greater awareness of the effects of discrimination and the need to challenge it;
- any person recruited to the service of the school, whether as a member of staff or a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;
- children who are admitted to the school and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;
- that there is a clearly laid out procedure which records and deals with all incidents of prejudice and discrimination which supports the victims of such discrimination and educates/counsels the perpetrator;
- all of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

2.2.7 Finally, we acknowledge that minority groups have often suffered disadvantage due to prejudice or ignorance. We recognise that it is all too easy for the structures of institutions to result in "inequality by default". We therefore commit ourselves to taking positive steps to examine our policies and practice and to change them where necessary.

2.2.8 Included in this policy are specific policies on disability, race and gender.

2.2.9 The main statutory provisions covering discrimination are the following:

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
Equality Act 2006
The Equality Act 2010

Also relevant are:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

2.2.10 The School's values, aims and objectives all accord with the equal treatment of people promoted by these laws and regulations, and the rights enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998. Central to all policies are our staff, Governors, students and their parents/carers.

DISABILITY EQUALITY STATEMENT

September 2018 – August 2021

The Governing Body and Senior Management Team of Loreto College are committed to ensuring an inclusive school and to operating a policy of equal opportunity in line with our Catholic ethos. This statement represents the response of the Governing Body to its duties to promote equality for disabled people.

We have pupils with a wide range of learning disabilities and we make every effort to adjust the curriculum for them. Because some of our school buildings are more than 100 years old, and we are in a conservation area, we do have access problems where the physically disabled are concerned.

What constitutes *disability*?

The Disability Discrimination Act 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 definitions in part 4 of the Act include:

- physical disability eg limitations to dexterity or mobility;
- sensory impairment (eg visual, hearing);
- mental health difficulties;
- chronic illness (eg asthma, epilepsy, diabetes);
- medical conditions, which may cause pain or other symptoms (eg side effects of treatment, poor attention, poor concentration), Asperger's Syndrome/ Autism Spectrum Disorder, and
- specific learning difficulties (eg dyslexia, dyspraxia).

The Involvement of Disabled People

We are committed to the involvement of disabled people in the development of this statement. The following steps have been taken to secure this involvement:

Local organisations for disabled people have been approached for their comments;

- disabled members of staff have been involved in the group devising this statement;
- parents of disabled children attending the school have been asked to contribute;
- disabled visitors to the school have been asked to contribute;
- the school has had regard to the Local Authority protocol, and
- the School Council has been asked to comment on the treatment of disabled pupils by staff and their fellow pupils in school.

Impact Assessment

We are aware that any statement must be backed up by action. During the period that this statement remains in force (3 years), we will:

- review all policies and practices on a rolling programme in respect of their effect on promoting disability equality;
- collect and analyse relevant statistical information (see below);
- collect qualitative information on the confidence and enjoyment of disabled people (see below);
- review advertising with a view to making it more encouraging to disabled people;
- examine general information for parents to ensure its accessibility;
- review the induction material for new students to ensure its accessibility;
- report as appropriate to the relevant stakeholders;
- incorporate an equality assessment in all new developments, and;
- aim to increase over time the number of disabled people in our employment and attending the school, although the numbers of disabled people in a relatively small organisation make targets impossible to set with any validity.

Information

We recognise the importance of collecting, analysing and acting upon information, if we are to discharge our equality duty. Accordingly we will collect the following information:

- data on the employment of disabled people. It is recognised that the number of disabled employees is likely to be statistically small in a small workforce and that it will be important to look at trends rather than at the year-on-year fluctuations;
- qualitative information from disabled employees or would-be employees. This will include an exit questionnaire;
- performance data for disabled children;
- disciplinary data for disabled children, and
- qualitative and quantitative information on the effect of interventions in regard to disabled children.

Use of Information

- The information collected will be reported to the appropriate Governors' Committees.
- A summative report will be made to Governors annually.
- It will be taken into account in decisions regarding staffing, curriculum and premises development.
- It will form part of the discussion with Subject Leaders on their annual Development Plan and in the drawing up of the school's annual Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan.

Actions Taken

The actions that the school has taken so far in regard to disability equality are to have:

- made available to all teaching staff, a 53-page booklet written by the School SENCO, giving guidelines to follow when teaching pupils who have Educational Needs as specified on the Inclusion Register. This guidance is well-respected in SEN circles and has been loaned to and used by SENCOs in other schools;
- installed a lift for access by a disabled member of staff to Food Technology. This also gives access to Science, IT and Textiles;
- improved exterior lighting;
- provided clear signage;
- provided two ramps for access;
- installed induction loops in the Hall and the Chapel;
- created disabled parking spaces in the staff and visitors' car parks;
- consulted with a member of staff with a hearing impairment, a recent visitor to the school who is a wheelchair user, a parent with mobility issues and a member of the local community who uses crutches or a wheelchair;
- as part of our Personal Education Programme, a project to identify access problems for a variety of disabilities. This includes walking the site blind-folded, on crutches or in a wheel-chair. This helps to raise the Year 8 students' awareness of the challenges to be met by disabled people, and
- carpeted rooms to reduce background noise levels;
- provided a wheelchair accessible meeting room.
- provided additional handrails for a disabled student;
- mapped routes through the school site for a disabled student;
- re-tarmacked an area to provide a slope to enable access;
- used paint to enable a student to differentiate steps; and
- door widened to enable access.

In 2018/19, the following actions have been taken:

- the black steps down to the canteen have been highlighted with white stripes;
- rocks near the path have been painted with high visibility paint;
- outside paths have high visibility paint at various points;
- wider and lighter doors have been fitted at the entrance into Hurst Lea;

- entrance to the main building via the Foyer has new lighter and wider doors;
- meeting room has been built in the lobby which is accessible for all, and
- automatic doors have been fitted for access into the main building from the disabled access route.

The school has undertaken a survey of students and pupils views. The survey reflected that the stakeholders felt that “promoting racial harmony” and “treating pupils fairly and equally” were outstanding aspects of school practice and that a major strength was community spirit.

Reporting

The actions of the school in regard to disability equality will be published annually in the School Profile and on the School Website.

Revision

The Head Teacher and senior staff will draw up a revised Statement, including the Special Educational Needs coordinator, involving disabled people and taking account of the actions taken during the life of this statement and information collected on its operation by January 2017. The revised statement will be subject to approval by the Governing Body.

Signed


David J Keiley
Chair of Governors

Signed


Maire Lynch
Headteacher

RACIAL EQUALITY POLICY

1. AIMS

- 1.1 To be a school where all members of the community live according to Gospel values and the principles and teachings of Mary Ward, promoting the virtues of freedom, sincerity, justice, truth and joy, to allow all members of the community to feel secure and able to work and live in an atmosphere of courtesy and respect.
- 1.2 To identify and eliminate any form of behaviour which causes distress to others.
- 1.3. To be a school where pupils are confident that they may acknowledge and reveal incidents of such behaviour, without fear of reprisals, knowing that they may expect support.

2. DEFINITION

- 2.1 In writing this policy, we have taken due note of The Macpherson Report's definition of institutional racism as: *the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture and ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.* We also have taken due note of the Department for Education's advice document "*Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools*" and Section 78 of the Education Act (2002).

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The co-operation of governors, staff, parents and pupils for the common good is needed in order to create the environment for which we strive.
- 3.2 Each individual, irrespective of colour, culture, ethnic origin or any other difference has a valuable contribution to make to our school community.
- 3.3 Through this policy, the Governing Body demonstrates its opposition to racism and discrimination; the school community will work to combat such attitudes by promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- 3.4 All members of the community are expected to treat others with fairness and respect, as is made clear in the Behaviour Policy.
- 3.5 Staff treatment of colleagues and pupils should act as a good example of the very high standards we seek to promote.
- 3.6 All pupils, especially older pupils and most particularly Sixth Form Prefects, are expected to help maintain high standards of behaviour.
- 3.7 Reminders of expectations will be given in form, in class or at assembly whenever necessary.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The Governing Body has responsibility for setting and maintaining the principles underlying the school's policy.
- 4.2 The Headteacher and Leadership Team will oversee the framing of a policy that aims to create an environment that promotes racial equality. A draft will be given to the Governing Body to be considered and approved after any necessary consultation with other

stakeholders. The Headteacher and Leadership Team will also organize support for the implementation of the policy.

- 4.3 All members of staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteer helpers, will ensure that they are fully aware of the policy, that the policy is consistently and fairly applied and that pupils are encouraged to be fair and respectful to all. Staff will lead by example in these areas, offering mutual support and maintaining high standards in their own conduct. Form Tutors have a pastoral responsibility to promote racial equality within the form group.
- 4.4 The Governing Body, Headteacher and all members of staff are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the policy promote equality for all. This will involve the regular review and monitoring of the policy.
- 4.5 Pupils will behave with courtesy and respect to all and will report any incidents of racist behaviour of which they become aware.
- 4.6 Parents and carers take responsibility for their children's education in racial equality outside the school environment. They will be alert for signs of racism and contact the school if they have cause for concern.

5. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

5.1 **Key Points:**

- Pupils will be encouraged to report racism.
- Any pupil or member of staff reporting racial discrimination will be listened to carefully.
- Investigation will be made.
- If racial discrimination is found to have occurred, suitable measures will be taken, as outlined in the Behaviour and Attendance Policy.
- Every attempt will be made to effect reconciliation where possible.

5.2 **Curriculum and Assessment:**

- The curriculum must provide access to common learning experiences for all pupils, regardless of ethnic group. It should be broad, balanced and differentiated to serve all pupils' needs.
- Teaching against racism will be embedded in the learning of all subjects, and schemes of work should reflect this.
- The curriculum should enable pupils to appreciate the historical, political, religious, cultural and economic situations that have formed the life stories of different cultures.
- Tasks, texts and books must not use any racist language but should promote positive images that challenge racist stereotypes.
- The types of questions used in school examinations or lessons must be suitable and not contain any overt or hidden cultural bias.
- Assessments must be accessible to all parents and pupils.
- Performance in examinations will be analysed to monitor achievement across ethnic groups.

5.3 **Pastoral:**

5.3.1 All members of staff have a role to play in ensuring that relationships based on mutual respect are fostered and developed. From the beginning of Year 7, through the P.S.H.E. programme and through assemblies, the pupils should be made aware of what constitutes racism and given an understanding of the effects of discrimination.

5.3.2 The names of all members of the community should be used and pronounced correctly. Due consideration should be given to parents for whom English is an additional language.

5.4 **Racial Incidents:**

- 5.4.1 A racial incident, as defined in The MacPherson Report, is one which the “victim”, or any other person directly involved, perceives as being of a racial nature, regardless of the race of the person who is the victim (i.e. from an ethnic minority or the ethnic majority).
- 5.4.2 Pupils should be reminded frequently of the necessity to report relevant incidents. These will be investigated by the Form Tutors and Year Co-ordinators who, when there is evidence of serious misconduct, will involve the Deputy Headteacher. Should this be necessary, parents will be informed.
- 5.4.3 All incidents of a racial nature will be recorded and reported within the school.

6. **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 6.1 The Leadership Team will devise and employ a scheme of control to monitor the implementation of this policy and will report to the relevant Governors' committee any significant problems. The Headteacher will demonstrate to the relevant Governor's committee that the scheme is an efficient and effective use of management resources, and will give an annual assurance that the necessary controls have been properly carried out. The Governors will review the policy regularly as part of their programme of policy review and may consult with students, staff and parents in this process.

LORETO COLLEGE, ST ALBANS - ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2019-2020

	Targets	Strategies	Timeframe	Goals Achieved
Short Term	To ensure that all staff have a good understanding of our students with special needs.	SENCO to address all staff and provide appropriate support.	Academic year 2019/20	All staff able to address the student needs.
Medium Term	To improve access for deaf students/parents. Provide a ramp in the main block. Staff to be offered opportunities to learn Makaton sign language as we make plans to work collaboratively Post 16 with Heathlands Deaf School.	To put a loop in the Hall.	December 2019 July 2020 2019-20	. Deaf students accessing our Post 16 offer.
Long Term	To consider partially sighted people on all fixtures and fittings.			
	To redesign an area to enable medical room on the ground floor.			

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

1. AIMS

- 1.1 To be a school where all members of the community live according to Gospel values and the principles and teachings of Mary Ward, promoting the virtues of freedom, sincerity, justice, truth and joy, to allow all members of the community to feel secure and able to work and live in an atmosphere of courtesy and respect.
- 1.2 To promote equality of opportunity between men and women and boys and girls.
- 1.3 To ensure the curriculum combats discrimination and gender stereotyping.
- 1.4 To be a school where staff and students may reveal incidents of gender inequality, without fear of reprisals, knowing that they may expect support.

2. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

- 2.1 Under the Sex Discrimination Act as amended by the Equality Act 2006 we have a statutory duty to carry out functions with due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful sex discrimination, and
 - promote equality of opportunity and good relationships between women and men and girls and boys.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The co-operation of governors, staff, parents and pupils for the common good is needed in order to create the environment for which we strive.
- 3.2 Each individual, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation, has a valuable contribution to make to our school community.
- 3.3 Through this policy, the Governing Body demonstrates its opposition to discrimination; the school community will work to combat such attitudes by promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and pupils.
- 3.4 All members of the community are expected to treat others with fairness and respect.
- 3.5 Staff treatment of colleagues and pupils should act as a good example of the very high standards we seek to promote.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 The Governing Body has responsibility for setting and maintaining the principles underlying the school's policy.
- 4.2 The Headteacher and Leadership Team will oversee the framing of a policy that aims to create an environment that promotes gender equality. A draft will be given to the Governing Body to be considered and approved after any necessary consultation with other stakeholders. The Headteacher and Leadership Team will also organize support for the implementation of the policy.
- 4.3 All members of staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteer helpers, will ensure that they are fully aware of the policy, that the policy is consistently and fairly applied and that pupils are encouraged to be fair and respectful to all. Staff will lead by example in these

areas, offering mutual support and maintaining high standards in their own conduct. Form Tutors have a pastoral responsibility to promote an understanding of issues of gender inequality.

- 4.4 The Governing Body, Headteacher and all members of staff are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the policy promote equality for all. This will involve the regular review and monitoring of the policy.

5. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY**

5.1 **Key Points:**

- Staff and pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of sexual discrimination.
- Any pupil or member of staff reporting sexual discrimination will be listened to carefully and all instances investigated.
- If sexual discrimination is found to have occurred, appropriate actions will be taken.
- The curriculum must promote gender equality.
- Students should feel that their access to opportunities, both within school and in the wider community now and later, are not restricted by their gender.
- The access to employment, promotion and development opportunities will be fair regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of the member of staff.

6. **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 6.1 The Leadership Team will devise and employ a scheme of control to monitor the implementation of this policy and will report to the relevant Governors' committee any significant problems. The Headteacher will demonstrate to the relevant Governor's committee that the scheme is an efficient and effective use of management resources, and will give an annual assurance that the necessary controls have been properly carried out. The Governors will review the policy regularly as part of their programme of policy review and may consult with students, staff and parents in this process.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES:

Over the last 4 years, significant actions have been taken regarding equality, as summarised below.

General action:

- A fire evacuation plan to support all vulnerable students is in place to ensure the safe evacuation of all disabled student
- Risk assessments in place for individual pupils.
- Access improved to the School Dining Room.
- New Sixth Form block allocated.
- One set of exit doors adapted into a disabled-accessible fire exit with ramp.
- Condition of ramps to manual fire doors leading off main corridor improved.
- New automatic and wider entrance door fitted.

Actions taken to help students with mobility:

- Hand rails installed on the steps leading to St. Josephs and the Mary Ward building.
- Non slip high visibility tape installed on access ramps.
- High visibility paint on outside steps and hazards.
- Personalised routes in place to limit the use of stairs.
- On call system so Matron goes to the child in place.
- Replacement door installed in Hurst Lea to accommodate wheelchair access.
- Input from specialist teacher giving advice to staff.
- Allocation of classrooms.

Actions taken to help Hearing Impaired students

- Yearly inset sessions on deaf awareness teaching delivered by the SENCo or specialist teacher.
- Senior LSA oversees all of our HI students.
- Severely impaired students have a meeting with the designated LSA for HI once a week to check that all equipment is charged and working correctly.

Actions taken to help students with mental health difficulties:

- The support we give for children and families with mental health issues or families not coping for any reason has increased significantly. We undertook a Health and Wellbeing survey in 2016 with two groups of students and although we were pleased with the largely positive outcomes, we nevertheless acknowledge the significant impact of mental health issues on our students.

Actions taken to help students with medical conditions:

- Medical passports issued for all students with severe medical conditions.
- Names and photographs along with a brief outline of a student's condition are displayed in the staffroom, SENCOs office and the main school office.
- Names and photographs of students at risk of anaphylactic shock are displayed in the staffroom, SENCOs office and the main school office.
- If appropriate, an LSA or pastoral assistant will help in the day to day organising of medical equipment.
- A private space is available for nurses to visit the school to administer medication or check students medical equipment.

The school's equality objectives for 2019/20 are:

- to raise awareness among Support Staff of how best to support our students with special needs;
- to improve Governors' understanding of recent significant changes to legislation for special education needs;
- to address safety issues in some exterior areas;
- to ensure students have a comprehensive understanding of diversity;
- to ensure that the school ethos reinforces gender equality;

- to address safety issues in some interior areas;
- to provide designated routes for individual students around the building;
- to ensure the timetabler minimises distance between classes where possible for disabled students;
- to improve access for physically disabled parents and students, and
- to consider partially sighted people on all fixtures and fittings.

Action Plan:

- a) SENCO to give a talk.
- b) SENCO to give a short presentation at Governors' Meeting.
- c) New building designed with full disability access to all areas.
- d) To ensure that the PSHE scheme reinforces diversity issues.
- e) To provide access for physically disabled parents.
- f) To provide a ramp for the main block.
- g) To consider colour schemes, with due regard to the visually disabled students.
- h) To provide non slip flooring in certain buildings.
- i) To provide more handrails.



LORETO MISSION STATEMENT

Loreto educational communities in England are centred in God, rooted in Christ and animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, the founders of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

We are proud to be part of an international network of Loreto schools and colleges and we will work to interpret and apply the international guidelines for Loreto Education within the context of England in the early 21st century.

Within our schools and college the story of Mary Ward will be re-interpreted to, and by, each new generation. Her vision and values will find expression in the experience offered to, and shaped by, our students, parents, staff and governors.

We are ambitious for our students not just in the context of academic excellence but also in the context of human possibilities, and as educators we will stretch hearts as well as minds.

We invite our students to be women and men who use their gifts and talents to make a difference both globally and locally; men and women of courage who will challenge accepted notions and modes of society when they are at odds with the values for which we stand.

We will strive rigorously for the achievement of both personal and academic excellence within learning communities that:

- introduce students to a reflective way of thinking and living and encourage seekers of **truth** who will search critically for answers to the great questions of life
- encourage doers of **justice** who will stand with those on the margins of life and become responsible global citizens and agents of social change, committed to building a better world
- allow all the **freedom** to become their best selves and to take charge of their own lives and futures within environments that celebrate diversity and nurture independence of spirit
- develop relationships that are marked by a Christ-like respect and compassion and characterised by integrity and **sincerity**
- are **joyful** places where students enjoy their learning and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where the value of each individual is celebrated.