



Disability Access Policy Includes EYFS

Introduction

St Hilary's actively promotes democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect of those with different faiths and beliefs. These are fundamental British Values which underpin all that we offer, as does our School Motto 'Not for oneself but for all.'

This policy addresses Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), effective from September 2023, Part 3 – Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils. The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Regulations 2014 came into force in April 2015 and supersede the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) refer to any circumstances resulting in an individual pupil requiring different or additional help in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered to pupils of the same age. The areas of SEN include difficulties with one or more of the following areas: Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Sensory and/or Physical Needs.

The Code requires all schools to examine all aspects of their provision of educational and associated services and to ensure that the appropriate responses are made to meet the needs of those with disabilities or special needs. St Hilary's is wholly guided by these principles in planning and designing its educational provision and is committed to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to resources, to learning and to the curriculum. Additionally, St Hilary's actively promotes democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect of those with different faiths and beliefs. These are fundamental British Values which underpin all that we offer, as does our School Motto 'Not for oneself but for all.'

Documents in support of this Policy include:

- Admissions Policy
- English as an Additional Language Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Accessibility Plan

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the School's Health & Safety Committee.

Admissions Policy

Aim

The aim of the Admissions Procedure is to ensure that all pupils that join St Hilary's are able to be happy, successful and secure within our academic, cultural and pastoral environment. Entry to the school does not rely on passing a formal academic test. The school requires access to any relevant reports and information and pupils are invited to spend a Taster Day in the school prior to acceptance of a place. The purpose of this is to establish that the school will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers so that the pupil will have a complete, happy and successful time at St Hilary's leaving confident and prepared for the next stage of their education.

When an application is made the school requests details of any special needs which a prospective pupil may have so as to enable the school to consider any reasonable adjustments it might need to make.

St Hilary's does not discriminate on grounds of race or creed. We seek to operate our Admissions Procedures efficiently, fairly and sensitively. We value local and family connections within the school but also welcome new associations and links.

Pupils and their parents must be prepared to work with us for the good of the school community. They should understand our ethos, rules and aspirations and be prepared to work with the school to achieve and maintain them.

St Hilary's policy is to apply the above criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared with any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her ability.

St Hilary's Admissions process makes provision for the disclosure of disability and special needs and at all times the commitment of the school to deal appropriately and supportively in the admission's entry procedures is made clear to parents. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the School may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards appropriate. The school is sensitive to any request for confidentiality.

Appointment of Staff

St Hilary's School declares itself to be an Equal Opportunities Employer and is opposed to any form of discrimination against its staff or potential staff on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex or marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious beliefs and practices. The School will ensure that, whenever practical, physical disability is in itself no bar to recruitment, promotion or training.

The School expects and places an obligation upon all its Governors, the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team and all staff to respect and act in accordance with the content and spirit of the policy.

The School has a duty under the SEND Code of Practice 2014 to ensure that less favourable treatment does not occur in the following areas:

1. Curriculum
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Timetabling, classroom and school organisation and setting
4. Serving of school meals and catering at events
5. Interaction with peers, activities and visiting speakers/organisations
6. Assessment arrangements

7. School discipline
8. Exclusion / suspension procedures
9. Preparation of pupils for their next phase of education including the transition process

These are all bound by the limits of reasonable adjustment as detailed in the DDA 2005.

St Hilary's Special Educational Needs provision is the responsibility of the relevant SENCOs designated for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Pre-Prep and Prep and details can be found in the Special Educational Needs Policy. The organisation of the educational provision for any pupil with a special educational need is detailed in the SEND Policy. Assessment of all pupils is the responsibility of the Middle Leader with responsibility for assessment and reporting, who liaises with the relevant Head of Department and SENCOs, as outlined in the Assessment Policy. We endeavour to ensure that all subjects are available to each pupil, through differentiated teaching, adaption of resources and staffing.

Curriculum Activities

The Curriculum at St Hilary's is designed to help pupils to discover their talents in the broadest sense. Academic programmes and high quality teaching will, it is hoped, instil a love of learning. The curriculum broadly follows and extends the National Curriculum to allow a combination of breadth and specialisation. It is designed to stimulate, challenge and support all pupils. The Curriculum is inclusive and fosters the development of key competencies; speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The School's Curriculum is designed to ensure that every pupil maximises their potential. St Hilary's takes seriously its responsibility to prepare pupils for life beyond their time at the school. In general, high expectations are in place of all pupils and staff to remove all barriers to learning both within the curriculum and extra-curricular activity.

Accessibility: Buildings and Site

Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014, the School has a planning duty to audit access to the site, the buildings and facilities. There are parts of the School which are accessible to those who use wheelchairs or those with considerable physical difficulty. Mobile ramps are used to enable easier access to the Hall, and Link corridor, and disabled parking is available for visitors at the front of the school. Grab rails have been installed at every set of steps, even where there are just a couple of stairs. Access to the classrooms on the first floors is impossible by a wheelchair user or those with a considerable physical difficulty. A chair lift to enable access to the Library, Science laboratory and two class rooms, situated off the landing area, has been costed and could be installed if required. Access to other first floor areas cannot be organised in any substantial way by reasonable adjustment, short of making major alterations to the buildings at a prohibitive cost. However, every effort is made on an individual basis to support and accommodate any pupil/member of staff/visitor for whom these issues are identified as being challenging.

This policy and the Accessibility Plan are reviewed by the Health and Safety Governors' Sub Committee Meeting on an annual basis. The School will also strive to ensure that all Staff and Governors give due regard to this Policy and its implications through staff induction, mentoring and professional development.

Reviewed: June 2019, June 2020, June 2021, June 2022, June 2023, June 2024

Next review date: June 2025

Persons responsible: Mrs Hannah Wynn (Business Manager) Mrs Jane Whittingham (Headteacher)