



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY 2010

Incorporates the following pre-2010 policies or statements:

- Equal opportunities policy
- Race Equality Duty
- Disability Equality Duty
- Sexual Orientation statement
- Policy for education of children in public care
- Duty of schools to promote community cohesion
- Policy for education of children and young people unable to attend school for medical reasons

It relates to or bears on many other policies including the Health and Safety, Learning Support, Curriculum, Child Protection, and Pupil Disciplinary policies. It also relates to a number of the school's employment policies.

1. Introduction

This policy is required to ensure that the school complies with equality legislation, but it has a more important function, namely to articulate the school's Christian background and its commitment to the practice of faith in our daily lives and recognition of the moral context for everything we do. The school recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper, and the school rules state we 'expect high standards of behaviour, conduct and manners; insulting language or behaviour from any member of the community will not be tolerated'. We recognise that every single person has a fundamental right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Pupils with temporary or recurring medical or mental health needs are valued as full and participating members of the school community. As a Christian foundation, the school will do all that it can to ensure that such children are well supported through their period of absence from school and sensitively reintegrated once they are well enough to attend. St George's fully recognises its responsibility to promote the educational achievement and welfare of any of its pupils that are in Public Care.

We believe that every person is equally important and are opposed to all forms of harassment and intolerance. We are committed to the principles of individual self-esteem and dignity, and to promoting tolerance and empathy throughout our community. We will endeavour to combat all forms of injustice and prejudice, and try to assure that we are sensitive to individual needs

We particularly reject the way that some people abuse or discriminate against others because:

- they are richer or poorer, older or younger
- they are small, thin, tall or fat

- of the colour of their skin, eyes or hair
- they are male or female
- of their religion, denomination or beliefs
- of their race including colour, ethnic origin, Traveller background, and so on
- of personal appearance, clothes or mannerisms
- of disability, physical or mental
- of their likes and dislikes
- of their home situation or family circumstances
- they are popular or unpopular
- of their academic, physical or creative ability or lack of it
- of nationality, accent, name or language
- of sexual orientation
- of age
- of private political opinion

We value differences and encourage the unique and individual contributions of everyone to our community

From the viewpoint of pupil care, this policy supports the Every Child Matters agenda, in particular Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, and Make a Positive Contribution.

This policy also bears on our promotion of community cohesion in that we:

- Promote shared values and encourage pupils to engage actively with others to understand what they hold in common, with Chapel as a uniting occasion
- Provide opportunities for pupils to interact with people from different backgrounds and build positive relations, including links with different schools and different countries and cultures
- Support pupils with EAL and their teachers to remove barriers to effective learning
- Hold assemblies which involve members of the local and wider community
- Analyse assessment results to tackle underperformance by any particular group.
- Deal with incidents of prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Check that admission arrangements comply with the Code of Practice and do not deter parents from particular communities
- Ensure that the pupil voice is heard and able to effect change
- Maintain strong links and multi-agency working between the school and other local agencies e.g. youth support, police, different religious groups, health professionals and social care
- Develop links with work placed learning providers, other employers and arrange placements for pupils in voluntary community based activities.
- Engage with parents through curriculum evenings and family liaison work
- Ensure that there is a core offer of extended services.

2. Consultation

This policy was developed through consultation with all sections of the school community, in particular students, staff and parents.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Head Teacher will ensure that a school culture and ethos is established, maintained and developed which:

- celebrates diversity/equality and achievement
- promotes high expectations, positive attitudes towards disabled people and those of different ethnic groups/religions and other countries
- listens to and involves pupils, parents, carers and staff
- communicates behaviour expectations
- ensures that it welcomes applications for school places and jobs from all sections
- ensures that incidents are reported, analysed, addressed swiftly and effectively, and reported on and that all termly returns to the LA on racial incidents and anti-bullying are accurate and submitted on time.

He or she will also direct what the school will do to ensure that school policies and practice do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against adults or pupils in the school; that the school is accessible to all; and that positive role models and a wider perspective will strengthen the school.

The staff will actively implement this policy and support the monitoring of its impact.

Parents and carers will be consulted on the policy and will be kept informed through the school prospectus, the home/school agreement and the annual Curriculum Letter.

The governing body will:

- Ensure that equality targets are incorporated into the school improvement plan;
- Use its power to nominate governors to ensure its composition reflects the community it serves;
- Encourage parents and staff from all ethnic groups to apply when recruiting to the governing body;
- Ensure that the principles of best value are applied without discrimination when purchasing goods and services;
- Monitor the pattern and frequency of equality related incidents. It will receive reports from the Head Teacher and staff that enable evaluation of the relevance of provision for dealing with equality related incidents – defined as any incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to contravene this policy. Serious breaches of this policy constitute criminal offences.
- Review the issues arising from termly data returns submitted to the LA and consider any actions or issues arising;
- Confirm that the Head disseminates the outcomes of evaluation to the whole school community, together with a summary of the action to be taken.

The governing body expects all members of the school community to be committed to this policy, and that visitors will comply with it. It accepts responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented in every aspect of school life. If there is a breach of the policy, the school will take appropriate action.

4. Promotion of Racial Equality and Diversity

We believe that every person is equally important and that all members of our Christian community are entitled to respect irrespective of culture, religion, colour or nationality. We aim to support the diversity of culture and opportunity in the wider world through our school curriculum, and to promote the entitlement of each individual to protection against prejudice of any kind. Our fundamental objective is to nurture the identity of all children.

We will collect group and individual data on attainment by ethnicity, based on the national population census ethnic categories, as used in Hertfordshire. While the number of students in some ethnic categories will preclude meaningful analysis, we will analyse and assess this data in order to measure the school's performance and our effectiveness and to examine trends in progress and development. The results of such analyses will be used to plan positive changes, to address the challenges they present and to maintain and develop our successes. Other areas of the whole curriculum which may have an adverse impact on pupils' attainment will also be monitored.

These will include:

- Behaviour management (including exclusions)
- Racist incidents, racial harassment and bullying
- Curriculum, teaching and learning (including responses to diverse language and cultural needs, and Implementing the 'Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK' strand within citizenship education from September 2008)

4.1. Pupils' Attitudes, Values and Personal Development

In the school we will:

- Enable our pupils and staff increasingly to develop a critical awareness of diversity and equality
- Enable our pupils and staff to have the confidence and skills to challenge instances of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination
- Equip our pupils and staff to understand that reason, logic and sensitivity have to underpin ways and means of resolving arguments and conflicts
- Ensure a willingness by pupils and staff to learn from different cultures, backgrounds, faiths and beliefs and to further links, visits, and exchanges with other countries
- Recognise the importance of language to a person's sense of identity and belonging and consider pupils' language abilities as a teaching and learning resource and a strength
- Ensure that pupils have the opportunity to receive the support and guidance they need on an individual basis and take account of the personal and cultural needs specific to that individual
- Ensure that pupils have the skills to communicate effectively (including the ability to listen and discuss) and to defend their own opinions.

4.2 Teaching and Learning

The school will ensure that:

- Teaching methods and styles take full account of the needs of pupils' background experiences
- Access to optional subjects and out of school hours learning activities is fair and equitable across all ethnic groups
- Teaching methods encourage positive attitudes to difference, cultural diversity and race equality
- The diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented in the school with International School Status is seen as a positive resource for teaching and learning
- Where appropriate, staff receive training on strategies for helping bilingual and multilingual pupils to improve their English
- Teaching methods used are accessible to individuals and groups (monitored by ethnicity and background)
- All pupils are fully aware that staff have very high expectations of them and are continually challenged to reach higher standards
- A positive ethos of mutual respect and trust is fostered amongst pupils and staff, in which all members of the school community feel valued and safe
- Classrooms and other common spaces in the school, where work is displayed present positive and challenging images that are non stereotypical and reflect the multiethnic, multilingual and multicultural society and world

4.3. The Curriculum

All teachers will ensure that curriculum content and resources and classroom environments present and value Britain as a culturally diverse society and develop pupils understanding of the wider world. In presenting this diversity, all staff and volunteers will take care not to present different cultures in stereotyped ways.

All teachers will develop the dimension of cultural diversity as appropriate to their subject and care responsibilities. Collectively the school curriculum will:

- Support the development of personal, social and cultural identities in all pupils
- Teach pupils respect and value for diversity
- Teach pupils the nature of cultural diversity in Britain and globally through our International School Status
- Teach pupils the nature of inequality as it affects various groups, within the context of the rights and responsibilities of being a member of society.

4.4. Attendance, Exclusion and Behaviour

The school recognises that attendance and exclusion rates for particular minority ethnic groups can be unequal. Attendance, exclusion rates, numbers of pupils with Pastoral Support Plans (PSP) and teachers rewards/systems will be monitored for disparities across different ethnic groups. Strategies are employed in the school to reduce disaffection, encourage attendance and avoid exclusion for all students.

Where the pattern of a pupil's undesirable behaviour is being monitored, the circumstances leading up to that behaviour will be analysed in order to address any possible racial harassment and institutional racism.

We will monitor the exclusion of ethnic groups from both the classroom and the school and will establish that these discrepancies can be satisfactorily explained.

Understanding pupils' behaviour will include taking account of cultural and linguistic differences in self and emotional expression or dealing with conflict, so long as student conduct shows due regard for the high standards of conduct expected at St George's School.

The school accepts the right of a parent to have an advocate when dealing with matters pertaining to race discrimination.

The school will not disadvantage any ethnic group when assessing the right of pupils to take time off for religious/cultural observance and action is taken to minimise any disruption to the education of pupils who are absent for religious/cultural observance.

Where practicable, provision will be made for pupils who are on approved leave for religious/cultural reasons.

4.5 Parents and the Wider Community

Active steps will be taken to involve ethnic minority parents, including as appropriate: -

- the use of interpreters where practicable at parents consultation evenings, annual reviews, preparation for transition and PSP meetings. Students may be used for this purpose.
- active recruitment of such parents who can offer an additional language as classroom helpers, mentors and school governors.

The school seeks actively to work in partnership with local minority ethnic community organisations and where possible access the expertise, skills, knowledge and experiences of people from local minority ethnic communities. We will promote the community's access to school facilities.

4.6 Racial Harassment – The School Response

Racial Harassment is understood by St George's School to be:

'Any act or expression which causes harm or offence, directed by a member of one racial or ethnic group to others where, regardless of the motivation, the effect could be to create racial dislike or hatred'.

We are committed to trying to prevent and dealing immediately with:

- Threatened or actual physical assault
- Verbal abuse [calculated to incite racial hatred]
- Expressions of prejudice which are seen to offend others, or to influence their behaviour
- Racist graffiti [on school property]
- Distributing racist literature likely to incite racial hatred

- Wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known racist organisations
- Name calling
- Teasing in relation to language, religion or cultural background
- Remarks aimed at the wider families or communities to which individuals belong
- Printing out internet material designed to offend
- Offensive phone calls or text messaging, e-mail, website posting, or other electronic means

We recognise that the most important principle informing the school's response to any incident is the perception of the individual or group who has experienced harassment. All incidents, whether they appear serious or not, must be responded to. Failure to challenge any form of prejudice, especially on the part of adults, can be viewed by children as condoning it.

It is initially the responsibility of the individual who hears or witnesses an expression of racism to judge the impact and seriousness of the incident. Whether such expressions are calculated to incite racial hatred or not, the perception of the victim or group must direct the nature of the response. It is often the symptom of deeper problems, and those who suffer the abuse develop strategies for suppressing feelings.

Action:

- Challenge those involved
- All pupils in the school should understand that they have a responsibility to act, and to report. If in doubt, TALK TO MEMBER OF STAFF OR PREFECT. What they must not do is DO NOTHING.
- If the distress caused is evident, the incident must be reported to the member of staff on duty, to the Heads of House of both victim[s] and perpetrator[s] and, if appropriate, to the Pastoral Deputy Head.
- The incident must be logged on the MIDAS event record of the students involved as a racial incident.
- IF the incident involves any of the following:
 - a) Physical violence
 - b) Repeated or orchestrated harassment
 - c) Known links with outside agencies [extremist groups such as the British National Party]
 - d) Exclusion from the school related to a racial attack

it must be reported directly to the Herts LEA - The Manager, MECSS Unit, County Hall, Hertford SG13 8DF, Telephone: 01992 555934. They will then advise about legal requirements and when to involve the police, social services, and, most importantly, parents. This is also relevant for communicating information to School Governors.

If it is judged not to be of this level of seriousness, then the following action can be taken:

- Once Heads of House and Tutors are aware, both victim and alleged perpetrator should be interviewed, and both views of the situation taken into account
- If the victim is certain that he/she can deal with it by confronting/discussing the matter with the other person/people involved then a meeting should be arranged, with an adult present

- A suitable punishment will be set, consistent with the school's overall anti-bullying policy.
- The Head of Houses should ask to see those involved at a later date, to check that there has been no repetition of the offence

5. Promotion of Gender Equality

We must:

- Recognise and confront any prejudice which discriminates against a person because of gender;
- Identify and report any instances of sexual harassment, verbal or physical, however trivial they may seem;
- Make sure that the school curriculum does not, explicitly or implicitly, promote stereotypical images of gender roles.
- Endeavour to monitor all aspects of school life in order to eliminate unfairness, reviewing textbooks and teaching resources that might reflect an out-dated view of gender roles. We must be especially careful about these areas of school life: PE and Games, Food Technology, Engineering, Uniform and Dress Codes, Careers, Drama, and any subjects vulnerable to traditional notions of preference according to gender
- Try to provide positive role models amongst those in authority, for both sexes, that do not either re-enforce stereotypes or suggest aggressive 'separatist' attitudes to the opposite sex
- Ensure that boys and girls and women and men staff, should participate equally in activities and tasks around school, so that duties are shared and not distributed according to 'traditional' roles - e.g. boys should make coffee for parents' evenings, girls can be asked to move furniture
- Confront, where we judge it necessary, and especially where it causes offence, the use of sexist language by staff or pupils.
- Monitor the extent to which boys or girls under-achieve at any point during their school career, especially with regards to the achievement of boys in certain subjects at KS3, where they are statistically at risk of under-performing.

6. Acceptance of Difference in Sexual Orientation

The St.George's School Sex and Relationships Education Policy lists "Tolerance of different values and attitudes and lifestyles of others" alongside "Encouraging respect for moral and spiritual values which reflect the Christian foundation of the school" in the *Attitudes and Values* section. In the *Knowledge and Understanding* section, the points include "Learning and understanding about physical development at appropriate stages and dealing with issues of gender and stereotyping" and "Not one sexual orientation or type of sexual activity to be promoted".

The School educates young people aged eleven to eighteen and recognises that in their time with us they go through considerable physical and emotional changes as they mature. Many also begin to experience deeper personal relationships in which they are at their most vulnerable and may be most deeply affirmed or damaged as humans. The School recognises that personal relationships can be a very sensitive issue to individuals of any age.

The School has a non-denominational Christian foundation and its intake reflects this as analysis shows that pupils come from a wide variety of Christian Church backgrounds. An examination of the approach of these different Christian denominations to sexual orientation reveals some sharp contrasts. They range from the view that sexual orientation is what someone is (i.e. it is not chosen and changeable), to that of sexuality being a behaviour which is not genetically determined and, therefore, it is chosen and changeable. Although in some denominations there may be acceptance that some attitudes and feelings may be natural and genetically determined, some sexual practices are viewed as unacceptable in a Christian context. This sensitive area has led to controversy and contrasts between denominations in their practice. The area of common ground shared by many different denominations is the recognition that all individuals are loved by God and should be accepted as members of any Church.

Pupils' experiences of the media, particularly television, DVDs and magazines, expose them to a wide range of situations in which sexual orientation may play a significant part as a background to particular lifestyles. These may contrast with their own home life that is often based on some variation of a family that has parents or step parents or partners in a heterosexual relationship as the only pattern that they experience in their day to day lives and in the lives of their friends and neighbours. Such a mix can be confusing for someone who may be already feeling insecure as they are experiencing adolescence. St George's educates young people to look carefully and sensitively at individual sexual orientation, and to recognise that gay and lesbian relationships are, like heterosexual ones, often deeply loving and lasting. We look to dispel the idea that homosexual relationships are confined to the narrow limits of sexual pleasure, and encourage young people to be tolerant in a context of strong moral principles

St.George's School will continue to treat the issues related to sexual orientation in a sensitive manner using staff who are comfortable to do so and equipped to present a range of perspectives held by various Christians and contemporary society. Delivery will be appropriate to the age and needs of a particular group and individuals within it. The teaching will seek to promote reflection. Resources will be carefully chosen by the staff involved in order to achieve the above and to avoid inappropriate responses that could result from indiscriminate or uncritical use of some published materials. The School recognises and respects the right of parents to withdraw their children from the non statutory aspects of Sex and Relationships Education.

As with other issues, individual pupils who require support and advice will normally receive it first via the House system through their tutor or Head of House. Pages of the prep diary also contain details of a range of organisations that pupils can contact. It may be that a pupil will want to see a counsellor to discuss issues affecting them and this can be arranged by the SENCO, who is also the Child Protection Officer.

If an individual is being victimised or harassed because of issues related to sexual orientation, then the school's Anti Bullying Policy will be implemented. The school is particularly sensitive to the destructive impact of homophobic comments to individual well being and a culture of tolerance. Staff are instructed to always challenge homophobic

comments, whatever the intention, of those making them, and to make that challenge publicly so all can see that the school will not tolerate such actions.

7. Educational Visits and Representing the School

Students will have an equal opportunity to take part in educational visits and activities. All reasonable adjustments will be made to provide for individual needs, and to allow students with disability or special needs to access opportunities. St George's is energetic in ensuring that we meet legal obligations in providing opportunities at adjusted or no cost to students on Free School Meals, and assists parents in making applications where appropriate to bodies such as the Harpenden Trust and James Marshall Trust. The school is careful to abide by any requirement that an activity be offered on the basis of a voluntary contribution rather than a compulsory payment.

The precise nature of activities and opportunities will dictate to whom they are offered, and this includes the way applications are ranked and considered. We look to be fair and transparent, and use criteria which are clear, defensible, and well founded. It may be appropriate, in consultation with senior leadership to:

- Decline to offer the chance to participate where a student's behaviour has shown that their participation would not be in the interest of an educational and orderly trip
- Decline to offer the chance to participate where a student's attendance at school is unsatisfactory
- Offer the chance to participate only to those able to gain appropriate benefit e.g. because of their level of prior attainment, or because they have studied a particular course
- Offer the chance to participate as a reward for previous service or contribution to the school
- Offer the chance to participate on the basis of aptitude, e.g. for a sports or music tour, or to a particular individual ahead of other individuals because they have a niche talent or role essential to the group overall
- Offer the chance to participate because a twin or other family member has been allocated a place on a particular trip or parallel trip
- Offer the chance to participate only to a particular age group, or set aside a certain number of places to each gender for reasons such as limitations on layout of accommodation, matching exchange partners, or achieving an appropriate social mix to ensure the overall success of the trip

The school will look to provide an appropriate timescale for students to return reply slips and monies for visits so as not to disadvantage students who are boarders or whose families are less well placed to find deposit payments. Deposits are kept to a minimum for the same reason. While sympathetic to parents' wishes that the school track student participation in visits so that a student who misses out on a visit in one year might be given priority the next time they apply, this is seldom possible.

8. Promoting Opportunity for Disability and Acceptance of Disability

The Governors of St George's recognise their responsibility to develop a disability equality scheme whereby:

- The school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that students can gain maximum benefit from the curricular and other opportunities on offer, regardless of disability;
- The school will recruit, manage and motivate staff, regardless of disability, and will make reasonable adjustments to enable them to fulfil their duties;
- The school's physical environment and its cultural and social ethos will be adjusted wherever reasonable to make it equally accessible to all members of the school's community regardless of disability.

In order to achieve this, the school will consult the staff, the pupil body and the wider school community. We will consider a broad definition of what constitutes disability. We will seek to put in place plans which will overcome barriers to inclusion of disabled people. We recognise that there are likely to be examples where significant expenditure will be required and that these will take time to implement. Actions thus identified will be included in the School Improvement Plan for consideration by the Governing Body.

9. Meeting the Needs of Children Looked-After

Children in Public Care (children looked-after) include those who are subject to Care Orders and those cared for on a voluntary basis by the Local Authority ('accommodated'). Such pupils may be socially disadvantaged and may also face additional barriers.

St George's School will appoint a Designated Teacher for Children in Public Care who, with the pupil's Head of House will:

- Ensure that all staff who are in contact with the young person in care are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage faced by such children and understand the need for extra support to overcome them.
- Encourage the pupil's involvement in Chapel, extra curricular activities, House competitions, school trips, work experience etc.
- Ensure that a Home-School Agreement is drawn up with the primary carer and signed by the Social Worker.
- Intervene if there is evidence of individual underachievement, absence from school or internal truancy.
- Inform the planning for the pupil by the Connexions Service with the help of the School's Head of Careers.

In addition the Designated Teacher for Children in Public Care will:

- Act as an advocate for young people in public care.
- Develop and monitor systems for liaising with carers and colleagues in CSF.
- Monitor the educational progress of all children who are looked-after in order to inform the school's development plan.

- Work with individual pupils, possibly through the carer, to arrive at a statement about their circumstances that they would be happy to share with staff and other pupils.
- Help the young person to make a contribution to the educational aspects of their Care Plan.
- Implement a Hertfordshire Personal Education Plan for each pupil and review it as required in the notes of guidance as this will contribute to the educational component of their Care Plan.
- Supervise, with the help of the Deputy in charge of Admissions, the smooth induction of a new looked-after child into the school.
- Help communication with CSF staff so that the Personal Education Plan can inform the young person's Care Plan.
- Attend, arrange for someone else to attend, or contribute in other ways to care planning meetings and statutory reviews.
- Be the named contact for colleagues in CSF.
- Ensure speedy transfer of information between the school, agencies and individuals, including ensuring that copies of end of year reports are sent to the young person's Social Worker in addition to the carer and if appropriate parent/s.
- Liaise with the member of staff responsible for monitoring children on the Child protection register.
- Attend training events organised by the Education Support Service for Children in Care and cascade training to school staff as appropriate.

The Governing Body of St George's School shall appoint a Governor with special responsibility for Children in Public Care who will report to the Governing Body on an annual basis:

- The number of looked-after pupils in the school.
- A comparison of test scores as a discrete group, compared with those of other pupils, where this can be done in a statistically meaningful way.
- The attendance of pupils as a discrete group, compared to other pupils.
- The level of fixed term/permanent exclusions.
- Pupil destinations.

The named governor should be satisfied that the school's policies and procedures ensure that looked-after pupils have equal access.

10. Meeting the Needs of Students Unable to Attend School Through Medical Reasons

Our policy seeks to overcome potential barriers to learning for our pupils who have medical needs. This includes those who are physically ill or injured, those with mental health problems and pregnant pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons. The aim is to minimise the interruption and disruption to the pupil's schooling by continuing education as normally as his or her condition permits and within the resources available to us. We work towards the pupil's reintegration into school as soon as possible.

10.1 Named Person

The designated teacher in this school who is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all pupils with medical needs are met is the SENCO. She will take an active and continuing role in the pupil's educational, social and emotional progress.

To meet their needs in school this named contact will ensure that wherever possible facilities are available to meet individual needs, e.g. a designated toilet for pupils with Crohn's disease.

The school will at all times aim to work in partnership with parents or carers to ensure the best possible outcomes and a return to school as soon as possible.

The designated teacher will work with the pupil's Head of House, who will have the responsibility for liaising with parents or carers and various agencies whenever a pupil is too ill to attend school.

This contact will ensure that procedures are followed when a pupil is absent from school for medical reasons including procedures to support;

- early identification
- referrals
- personal education plans
- reintegration into school
- pupils working towards public examinations.
- involvement of the pupil
- pregnant schoolgirls and schoolgirl mothers
- Post 16
- evaluation

10.2 Early Identification

All staff take responsibility for the identification of pupils who are on school roll but are absent from school with a medical need which may impact on their ability to access the curriculum. This will be monitored through the pastoral staff, form teachers, Heads of House and the Named Person. The School Nurse has an important role in passing on early warning signs suggesting a pupil may be chronically unwell from records of those reporting unwell during the school day. School secretarial staff provide Houses with summary attendance figures which enable Houses to liaise with home where illness is beginning to

have a serious impact on the pupil's studies.

All staff will support the Named Person and Head of House to establish, where possible, the amount of time a pupil might be absent and identify ways in which the school can support the pupil in the short term e.g. providing work to be done at home in the first instance.

10.3 Referrals

The Named Person will ensure the pupil's Head of House has filled in a CSF referral form clearly identifying Hospital and Home Education (ESTMA) as the provider and will set in place the referral process where the absence reaches 15 school days in a term or earlier where it is clear that a pupil will be absent for such a period. The Head of House will liaise with parents or carers to provide medical evidence to accompany the referral. The school will ensure that where pupils with long-term and recurrent conditions are absent, the Hospital and Home Education Quadrant Co-ordinator will be informed and medical evidence secured. The school will communicate with other parties, attend reviews and facilitate communication between the pupil and the school.

10.4 Personal Education Plans

The plan will set out the education that will be delivered during the period of absence. It is an on-going document or set of documents that will be updated and revised at each review meeting according to the pupil's medical and educational needs.

The school will provide work and materials for pupils who are absent from school because of medical needs. Detailed work will be set by subject teachers in the first phase of absence.

The school will work with ESTMA staff to ensure continuity of education and the Named Person will initially work with the Head of House to arrange for the setting, collection and marking of work, depending on the child's needs.

In the case of long term absences with ESTMA tutoring in place, the setting of detailed work will give way to the provision of information to ESTMA staff on the pupil's capabilities, and such tools to guide the work of ESTMA staff as a current programme of work, half-termly plans of work or curriculum plans or schemes of work.

A flexible approach will be needed to take into account any gaps in a pupil's learning resulting from missed or interrupted schooling.

10.5 Reintegration

The school recognises the key role it can play in ensuring successful reintegration of pupils returning after a period of illness. We will provide support, together with ESTMA staff, to assist a smooth reintegration back into school. We will work in partnership with parents, CSF and medical staff, to ensure a flexible approach to meeting a pupil's needs. We will involve peers to ensure they support the pupil's reintegration. We will consider exempting pupils from the full range of National Curriculum arrangements on a temporary basis whilst they readjust to normal school life.

10.6 Public Examinations

The school will implement procedures for ensuring that pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons have access to public examinations, possibly as external candidates, and applications for special arrangements are made to the awarding bodies where appropriate.

10.7 Involvement of the pupil

As far as is possible, the school will ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school because of medical needs are kept informed about extra-curricular activities and other school events. The Head of House is responsible for this. This will enable such pupils to participate, where possible and appropriate. It is the responsibility of the tutor to encourage contact with peers through visits, cards and e-mails where possible. The school will ensure that all procedures and arrangements are both realistic and take account of pupils' views.

10.8 Pregnant Schoolgirls and Schoolgirl Mothers

We will refer pregnant students at any age to ESTMA in order to make sure appropriate support (e.g. teaching, childcare) is available if needed. The pupil will remain in school for at least the first 24 weeks and longer if she is fit and able to do so. If it is agreed that an alternative short term placement out of school is required this will be supported in the same way as a child with medical needs. The same curricular and exam liaison procedures will apply.

10.9 Post 16

We will ensure that all pupils over 16 years of age who are absent from school for medical reasons will be referred to the Connexions Hertfordshire service at the earliest opportunity. They will have access to advice and guidance from the Connexions Hertfordshire service to help them prepare for their next steps in education and work to overcome any barriers to participation. One of our aims will be to give intensive support to pupils facing complex problems. Where a pupil has had their education significantly disrupted for medical reasons and is taking external examinations a year late, we will work together with ESTMA during Year 12 to ensure that they are able to complete their statutory education.

10.10 Evaluation

We recognise that a pupil who is unable to attend school because of medical needs must not be removed from the school register without parental consent, even during a long period of ill health. The school and the Named Person will always seek to work as closely as possible with parents and carers, who need to be realistic in their expectations of staff in a busy secondary school. If however, parents and carers are not satisfied with the service they receive they should in the first instance raise this with the Headteacher.

10.11 In the Boarding Context

A boarder who is unable to attend school for medical reasons will be looked after in accordance with our current procedures for sick pupils i.e. will be looked after by our boarding matron during his / her duty hours, by the school nurse during the day, and with boarding staff on call during the night. Parents will always be informed and will have the option of having their child at home until they have recovered. In certain cases, medical advice may require the child to stay at home. For long-term or recurrent illness, the

Boarding Housemaster / Mistress (BHM) will liaise with the Named Person, the Head of House, and the pupil's tutor in school to ensure the required support. Matrons will deal with medical requirements and BHM will ensure that parental contact, support, and the transfer of work is ongoing. If parents wish to have their child at home for long spells pending recovery, and if this is medically recommended, the situation will be sympathetically considered.

The boarding houses do not have single rooms. If the house is not full, there may be the option of offering an empty room for one child's use. Usually however, a sick boarder would be in the sick bay within the house, or would remain in a dormitory with his or her peers if the condition allowed.

The general aims of the school policy are the same within the boarding context.

10.12 Challenge

The imperative of supporting children with medical needs does not preclude the obligation on the school to promote normal attendance, as where achievable this will be in the best interest of the student's academic outcomes. Liaison with the student and parent does not mean that the school will always proceed in accordance with their wishes. The views of other key professionals, such as the A.I.O., are also important

11. Equal Opportunities for Staff

St George's recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination. This applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment and promotion, and provides guidance and encouragement to employees at all levels to act fairly and prevent discrimination on all the grounds listed in the introduction to this policy.

12 Recruitment

It is school policy that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on any of the grounds listed, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. The organisation is committed not only to its legal obligations but also to the positive promotion of equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment.

The school recognises that adhering to this policy, combined with relevant employment policies and practices, maximises the effective use of individuals in both the organisation's and employees' best interests. St George's recognises the great benefits in having a diverse workforce with different backgrounds, solely employed on ability. St George's will not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief in the allocation of duties between employees employed at any level with comparable job descriptions. The school recognises the value of diversity in the school staff and governing body and will ensure that its recruitment policy

- does not discriminate against minority ethnic groups or on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief
- takes appropriate action to seek staff and governors from a diversity of backgrounds.

The application of recruitment, training, and promotion policies to all individuals will be based on job requirements and an individual's ability and merits.

All employees of the organisation will be made aware of the provisions of this policy.

Advertisements for posts will give sufficiently clear and accurate information to enable potential applicants to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about vacant posts will be provided in such a manner that does not restrict its audience in terms of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

Recruitment literature will not imply a preference for one group of applicants unless there is a genuine occupational qualification which limits the post to this particular group, in which case this must be clearly stated. We are concerned to encourage people from under-represented minority ethnic groups to apply for positions at all levels in the school.

All permanent vacancies will be circulated internally.

All descriptions and specifications for posts will include only requirements that are necessary and justifiable for the effective performance of the job.

All selection will be thorough, conducted against defined criteria and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job. Where it is necessary to ask questions relating to personal circumstances, these will be related purely to job requirements and asked to all candidates.

Steps will be taken to ensure that cultural bias is removed from recruitment and selection processes and that all involved in recruitment and selection understand how to ensure race equality in the process.

The School will put in place any reasonable measures and/or adjustments within the workplace for those employees who become disabled during employment or for disabled appointees.

13 Training and Career Development

Employees will be provided with appropriate training regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We will ensure that within budgetary constraints, all staff have access to professional development opportunities, to support and guidance as appropriate and to career progression opportunities. Such access will be monitored by ethnicity.

All employees will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all.

We recognise the potential vulnerability of isolated minority ethnic staff and will ensure that appropriate support and networking opportunities are available.

Our awareness of issues related to cultural diversity and staff effectiveness in dealing with issues of equality is directly addressed in staff induction and training sessions, staff meetings and/or performance management meetings as appropriate. The school strives for consistency of approach and effective practice.

14 Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and senior staff to ensure that all aspects of this policy are kept under review and are operated throughout the organisation.

The school will provide data for CSF to enable them to monitor staff recruitment and retention by ethnicity.

Where it appears that applicants/employees are not being offered equal opportunities, circumstances will be investigated to identify any policies or criteria which exclude or discourage certain employees and, if so, whether these are justifiable.

15 Grievances and Victimisation

St George's emphasises that discrimination is unacceptable conduct which may lead to disciplinary action under the school's Disciplinary Procedure.

Any complaints of discrimination will be pursued through the school's Grievance Procedure.

16. Admissions

Every application will be considered according to the published admissions criteria as required by law. Children looked-after are given the priority required by the Admissions code. Children with medical needs will not be disadvantaged regarding admissions to this school, and those with a medical or social circumstance which makes St George's uniquely well suited to their needs are given some priority in admissions criteria.

As a school we are conscious of the vulnerability of our pupils at times of transfer into and out of the school. Appropriate guidance and support will be provided for all parents and pupils in relation to the new context in which the children will learn. We will seek to ensure that all vulnerable pupils are nurtured and supported in a safe environment.

Appendix

St George's SENCO and Child Protection Officer is Mrs J Gibbs