

# Meeting your individual needs

## Our Policy

Our Mission is to be a centre of educational excellence, opportunity, challenge and support within a caring, Christian environment.

In keeping with our Mission and Equality and Diversity Policy, we value each member of the College community and welcome applications from students with learning difficulties and disabilities. We always respond positively and flexibly to the needs of each student and endeavour to meet your learning requirements completely and appropriately so you can participate fully in College activities and realise your full potential.

We want you to get the best from your course. If you have any concerns about starting your chosen course at Carmel or any aspects of college life, we would like you to tell us. You can speak to Linda Carr, our Head of Learning Support, who will discuss your concerns with you and look at how we can best support you. We respect your right to confidentiality and usually sensitive information will not be shared with a third party. However, if your safety is at risk we have a legal obligation to break confidentiality. In this case we will tell you.

You do not have to tell us about your disability or support need – that is your right – but if you do tell us, we can then help you. There are many ways that we can support you whilst you are studying at Carmel and they are described in this booklet.

## Learning Support Team

Linda Carr, our Head of Learning Support, is your key contact. Linda liaises with the Study Support Tutors, Personal Achievement Tutors and Subject Tutors to ensure the necessary support is in place for students. The College also has an extensive network of contacts with outside agencies.

The Learning Support Team will treat you as an individual and will help to identify what support and/or equipment may be appropriate to your individual needs. Individual support recommendations and actions will be agreed to make your life at Carmel as accessible and independent as possible. This could include for example:

- ◆ Adapted equipment – adjustable chairs, variable height tables
- ◆ Communicator who uses BSL
- ◆ Use of a quiet space
- ◆ Course materials eg. handouts, reading lists, given in advance
- ◆ Curriculum support – information technology, additional tutor
- ◆ Examination support – adjustable desks, large type question papers, extra time, readers, scribes, laptop computers etc.
- ◆ Extra support in or out of class
- ◆ Extra time for assignments or tests

- ◆ Handouts in alternative formats such as large print or taped information
- ◆ Individual study skills and advice – coursework, planning, time management, revision, exam techniques, essay and report writing, stress management etc.
- ◆ Note takers
- ◆ Rest breaks
- ◆ Tape recorders

The Learning Support Department has experience of working with students with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia, epilepsy, ME, ADHD/ASD including Asperger's Syndrome, hearing and visual impairment, health conditions, mental health difficulties, mobility difficulties and so on.

To help communicate your needs, the Learning Support Department can, **with your consent**, give information to staff at Carmel about your individual needs and also advice on how to support you in class.

This may include for example your Personal Achievement Tutor, your Subject Tutors, the Exams Team or the Library and Study Centre staff. This will normally be treated confidentially.

## How do I find out about Carmel?

If you attend a school that has a formal link with Carmel, one of our Liaison Officers will visit your school in the Autumn Term to talk to Year 11 students. During this visit, you will have the opportunity to speak to your Liaison Officer about the additional support you may need and any concerns you have.

You will also be given a copy of our prospectus which gives information about the courses we offer, the facilities and the support we give to all students. More detailed information is available on our website. You can also visit the college on one of our Open Evenings.

If your school does not have a formal link with Carmel, you can attend one of our Open Evenings held in October and November each year, where you can pick up a copy of our prospectus and course leaflets, look around the facilities and meet tutors, members of the Learning Support Department, Careers Advisers and students.

You can also contact our Admissions Department to arrange a visit at any time.

## What can I study at Carmel?

Carmel offers courses for students with a whole range of abilities. Students can choose from a wide range of Advanced courses, an Art Foundation Diploma and a range of degree courses.

In addition, our Foundation Learning department offers courses for students with moderate learning difficulties and disabilities who are working at Entry Level or Level 1. The Foundation Learning department is staffed with the equivalent of 6

full-time Teachers, 9 Learning Assistants, 3 Care Assistants and a SEN Learning Mentor to accommodate the needs of a wide range of students.

We believe in a policy of Inclusive Learning whereby all students with disabilities and learning support needs are taught in mainstream classes but are offered additional support appropriate to their needs where needed, so that they can participate fully in College activities and achieve their potential.

## **Will my teachers understand my needs?**

All staff at Carmel receive regular In-Service Training to enable them to understand the needs of students with disabilities and their support needs. Tutors will have detailed information about your learning needs and strategies to help in the classroom.

## **How will I cope with the exams?**

We have considerable experience of, and have been very successful at making special arrangements for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, this special provision depends very much on allowances being granted by the Examination Boards.

It is very important that you notify our Learning Support Department as early as possible if you believe that you are entitled to access arrangements. We will make an application on your behalf as soon as possible as this process may take some time.

In some cases an updated assessment by the Educational Psychologist may be required.

Special arrangements may include for example:

- ◆ Provision of adjustable table and chair if you have a physical disability
- ◆ Extra time (usually 25% for dyslexia)
- ◆ Taking your exam in a separate room
- ◆ Specially prepared question papers eg. enlarged type, coloured paper if you are visually impaired
- ◆ Readers, amanuenses (script writer)
- ◆ Provision of computers
- ◆ Rest breaks

Should it be decided that you are entitled to any of the above, your tutors will ensure that this will be incorporated into your normal way of working.

## **Will I be able to access the College facilities?**

There is designated parking for disabled drivers at both the front and side entrances to the College. All buildings are accessible to wheelchair users by ramps and level approaches with lifts providing access to upper floors. All lifts have braille, low-level buttons and spoken information. The two main entrances to College, the entrance to the Library and all entrances to our new buildings have

automatic entry doors with all other doors around College having lower handles. The College also provides adapted toilets and shower facilities, a Physio Room and a Medical Room.

The only part of the college that is **not** accessible to wheelchair users is the mezzanine floor of the Library which provides computer facilities. However alternative facilities are available on the ground floor of the Library.

Special transport to and from Carmel is co-ordinated with the Local Authority.

## **I want to enrol on a course at Carmel and I have a disability, what should I do?**

Carmel College welcomes applications from students with learning difficulties and disabilities. Contact our Learning Support Department directly and we can take the necessary details. There is also an additional form to complete on the website after you have completed the application form. This allows students to outline their individual support needs and what concessions, if any, they have had at school eg extra time or a scribe.

You will also have the opportunity to discuss your learning needs during the interview evenings and admissions day.

We encourage students to tell us about their disability and/or support need as early as possible in the application process as this will help us to put in place the support you will need during your time at Carmel. An informal visit can be arranged if necessary.

Every student that applies is invited for an informal preliminary interview - this will take place at your school if your school has a formal link with us, or here at Carmel. At this interview, you are welcome to bring along a parent/guardian or any other person you choose.

## **What financial support is available?**

### **Bursary Scheme**

For up-to-date information please go to the Financial Support page of our website.

## **Need someone to talk to?**

The Chaplaincy is open to ALL students regardless of their beliefs and practices. Students are welcome to use this sacred space at times of personal stress, grief or thanksgiving.

The Chaplain, Rosie Woods, is on hand to provide a friendly, listening service and works closely with other members of staff to anticipate and respond to student needs. Rosie is a trained counsellor as well as our Chaplain and is always ready to listen confidentially and point you in the direction of other help at Carmel or beyond.

## **What if I have particular dietary needs?**

The Restaurant offers a range of foods and caters for vegetarians. If you have further dietary needs the Restaurant Manager will try and meet them. Please tell us about this on the Personal Support Form.

## **What about safety and medical support?**

### **First Aiders**

During College hours, a team of first aiders is also on call. To call a first aider, please contact Reception or Student Services.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is banned on College premises except in the shelter that is provided for those people who wish to smoke.

### **Fire evacuation**

Regular fire drills take place during the year. The nearest emergency exits are clearly identified in all buildings and you should make your way to the Assembly Point on the Sports Fields at the bottom of the car park. If you use a wheelchair, you should assemble at the entrance to the Sports Fields. **THE LIFTS MUST NOT BE USED.** All upper floors are equipped with EVAC Chairs to enable wheelchair users and those with mobility problems to be evacuated and staff are trained in the use of these.

The Estates Manager is responsible for Health and Safety issues.

## **How can I find out about other College services?**

All students receive a Student Diary on their first day at College. This gives details of the Student Charter, College Policies and Procedures and lists many of the services that the College provides.

Students can also ask for information at Student Services.

## **What can I do if I have any comments about my course or the way I am treated at the College?**

The College has a formal compliments and complaints procedure as part of the College Charter. This can be found in the Student Diary or on Carmel Connect in the Student Services section.

### **Useful contact information**

Carmel College Main Reception	01744 452200
Linda Carr Head of Learning Support	01744 452273
Admissions Team	01744 452212/452214

**Email:** [linda@carmel.ac.uk](mailto:linda@carmel.ac.uk) (Linda Carr, Head of Learning Support)

**RNID Type Talk:** our staff are familiar with this service.

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