**Access and Widening Participation Statement**

# Introduction

St Patrick’s College has a proud history of promoting educational access. Since its foundation in 1803 as a school for the children of Irish labourers in London, the college has prioritized providing full access to education, especially for those overlooked by the official system and from deprived areas or backgrounds.

# Our Access and Widening Participation Mission

We believe strongly in second chances, and our goal of increasing educational opportunities for all goes hand in hand with our dedication to innovation and diversity.

We aim to empower our students through the best possible vocational education at an affordable price, enabling them to change their lives for the better. We offer people from all walks of life the opportunities they need to improve their career prospects.

It is a great privilege to support our students, help unlock their potential, and see them successfully complete their courses.

We are committed to being the best-in-class for employability, and student success. The College participated in the 2016 the Destination of Leavers’ Survey in HE (DLHE) for the first time, alongside other alternative providers. The result shows that 54% of students surveyed entered into working full or part time within 6 months of graduating from the College. This is a true testament of our commitment for employability and producing best-in-class graduates. It was encouraging to learn that 6% of the total students surveyed within the DLHE population of 2016/17 entered into studying either full or part time within 6 months of graduating from the college.

# College Commitments to Access and Widening Participation for Students

At St Patrick’s, we are committed to:

* Ensuring that our students are at the heart of everything we do. We were delighted when the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) confirmed this commitment in HER re-review in 2016 as well as the annual monitoring in 2017, commending student engagement at the college and especially the active role of our Student Council.
* Offering education to everyone with the drive to succeed, supported by intensive one-to-one tutorial (which was also commended by the QAA in 2016).

* Exceeding the benchmark for alternative providers in 3 categories in the National Student Survey, NSS 2017.
* Section 2 “**Learning opportunities”**

St.Patrick’s scored 4% above the sector average in learning opportunity by students, with 88% for St.Patrick’s, compared with 84% for England.

* Section 3 **“Assessment and feedback”**

St.Patrick’s scored above the sector average with 77%, compared to 74% for England. Also, there is an increase from 2016 internal survey of 8%. 2016 average was 69% for this category.

* Section 7 **“Learning Community”**

St.Patrick’s scored 1% above the sector average with 78% compared to 77% for England.

* Recognising innovation, diversity, and individual success. A number of our students have or aspire to have their own businesses, and our vocational courses are designed to support these ambitions.

* Aspiring to be a model of good equality and diversity practice. Our student profile is very different from the young, white, undergraduate norm in established universities and is a matter of great pride. In 2016-17, 53% of our students were between 30-49 years old, 52% were female, and 48% were male. The student population made up of a diverse ethnicity with groups self-identifying as BME background is 48%, while the remaining student population is drawn from a diverse ethnic backgrounds.

# Future

The College will continue to build its existing portfolio by investing in new programmes to further diversify our student profile, providing greater support and opportunity at entry level to strengthen our accessibility. This will be coupled with new fields of study to attract a yet wider range of students and new progression opportunities (for example, top-up degrees) to enhance our students’ educational and employment outcomes.