



# Equalities & Diversity Policy

Policy Lead:

Principal

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This policy subsumes and replaces all previous policies pertaining to equality: e.g. Racial Equality, Disability & Race Equality Schemes. It applies equally, where applicable, to adults<sup>1</sup> and children in school

## **Legal framework**

1. St John's CofE Academy recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to the nine characteristics protected in law:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Race
4. Marriage and Civil Partnerships
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Gender reassignment
7. Disability
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Religion or belief.

In addition we include economic disadvantage within this policy, recognising that this has one of the most significant impacts on the achievement of children and young people.

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

## **Guiding principles**

4. In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.**

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background
- whatever their sexual identity
- whatever their economic or social background.
- We therefore act to ensure that each and every member of the school community:
  - experiences equality of opportunity
  - feels a full and respected member of the school community
  - has high expectations of themselves, their peers, staff, and others with regard to fair treatment
  - develops an understanding of race, ethnicity and multiculturalism alongside an appreciation of their importance in Britain today
  - develops an understanding and appreciation of disability and the contribution of disabled people in the community and UK
  - develops an awareness of conscious and unwitting racism alongside the skills and confidence to challenge instances of racist behaviour, language and attitudes

- develops an awareness that disability can be both seen or unseen and that people with learning and other disabilities (eg autism, Aspergers syndrome) have the same rights to reasonable and appropriate adjustments as those with more obvious needs.

**Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference.**

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised
- religion, belief or faith background
- sexual identity
- economic or social disadvantage.

**Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

**Principle 4: We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development**

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

**Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist**

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

**Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely**

We endeavour to engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We aim to consult and involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- people in heterosexual and same sex relationships.

**Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys
- people in heterosexual and same sex relationships

**Principle 8: We base our practices on sound evidence**

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information showing our compliance with the public sector equality duty (PSED) set out in clause 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

**Principle 9: Objectives**

We formulate and publish specific and measurable objectives, based on the evidence we have collected and published (principle 8) and the engagement in which we have been involved (principle 7). See Appendix 1.

The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate.

We keep our equality objectives under review and report annually on progress towards achieving them.

**The curriculum**

As part of our work to promote equality, we aim to ensure that within our educational provision children are offered opportunities to:

- Understand and celebrate diversity in all its forms;
- Learn about racial equality in a variety of curriculum areas (e.g. PHSCE, Science, RE, Art and English);
- Develop an understanding of global citizenship;
- Understand the power of language particularly relating to verbal abuse due to race, disability, sexual orientation or social standing;
- Develop an understanding of their rights, the rights of others, and their responsibilities to each other;
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of other religious beliefs and cultures;
- Recognise and challenge prejudice and discriminating attitudes and behaviour;
- Develop emotionally and intellectually with the personal qualities and attributes required to make a successful life in a diverse society.

**Ethos and organisation**

6. We ensure the principles listed in paragraph 4 above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- pupils' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and suspensions/exclusions

## **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

7. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1–3:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs
- prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.

8. We keep a record of prejudice-related incidents and, if requested, provide a report to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

9. The **governing body** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

10. The Chair of the **governing body** has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

11. The **Principal** is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

12. **Team Leaders** have day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.

13. The **leadership team is responsible for:**

- coordinating equality work within staff teams
- dealing with reported incidents of racism or harassment and reporting these in detail to the Headteacher
- monitoring the progress of minority group children, including those on free school meals and from less economically affluent families
- allocating resources fairly and equitably, including recognising that some children may require more than others for an equal and fair chance to enjoy and achieve

14. **All staff** are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 4 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

15. **Visitors and Contractors** are expected to be aware of, and comply with, the school's equality policy

### **Information and resources**

16. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and members of the governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.

17. All staff, members of the governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

### **Religious observance**

18. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

### **Staff development and training**

19. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

### **Breaches of the policy**

20. We will consider every breach of the policy in the light of the particular circumstances and, if pupils are involved, take into account their age and the nature of the breach. We will call on support from the Local Authority, the Police or other agencies as appropriate.

### **Monitoring and review**

21. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.

22. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to free school meals, disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

23. The governing body will endeavour to ensure that all relevant policies reflect the school's commitment to the principles of equality and that this commitment is reflected clearly in all its work.

24. All policies, functions and strategies are regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in promoting equality.

25. As further equality requirements come into force policies, functions and strategies will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated for their effectiveness in fulfilling the requirements of new legislation.

26. Outcomes of monitoring and assessment will be reported to the governing body and other key partners. Members of the school community will be kept informed of Equality and Diversity initiatives being undertaken.

