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# **Equalities Policy & Plan**

## **2015-19**

### **POLICY DETAILS:**

**Legal Status:** Statutory (Plan), Non-statutory (Policy)

**Adopted:** September 201

**Version Date:** September 2015

**Last Review:**

**Next Review:** September 2016 (Plan), September 2019 (Policy)

**Responsible Person:** Governing Body

*(Any reference to 'Governing Body' and 'Governors' is applicable to the Governing Body or Interim Executive Board of St Mary's Catholic Primary School and their respective appointed members.)*

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## **Mission statement**

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we strive to create a stimulating environment so that by learning, playing and working together, we openly follow Christ's teachings. We seek to offer every person the opportunity to be a unique and valued individual, sharing and developing belief in the teachings of Jesus through everyday relationships and mutual respect in our dealings with one another.

In order to achieve our mission

- We aim to create a welcoming, secure and caring environment in which all can happily work
- We aim to offer each child a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum of the highest standard to meet their spiritual, emotional, moral, intellectual and physical needs and to prepare them for the responsibilities of adult life
- We aim to develop a spirit of care, generosity, forgiveness and equal opportunity within our multicultural community through prayer and living our faith
- We aim to be a worshipping community by celebrating meaningful and appropriate liturgy and ensuring that prayer life is nourished, guided and developed

The achievement of pupils will be monitored by a number of factors including race, gender and disability and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

## **Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice**

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan; the school operates equality of opportunity in its day-to-day practice in the following ways.

### **Teaching and learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Encouraging classroom and staff room discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils

## **Admissions and exclusions**

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

## **Equal Opportunities for Staff**

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St Mary's Catholic Primary School .

We are committed to the implementation of equal opportunities principles and the monitoring and active promotion of equality in all aspects of staffing and employment.

All staff appointments and promotions are made on the basis of merit and ability and in compliance with the law. However we are concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community.

### **Employer duties**

As an employer we need to ensure that we eliminate discrimination and harassment in our employment practice and actively promote equality across all groups within our workforce.

Equality aspects such as gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment and faith or religion are considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination.

Actions to ensure this commitment is met include

- Monitoring recruitment and retention including bullying and harassment of staff
- Continued professional development opportunities for all staff
- Senior Leadership Team support to ensure equality of opportunity for all

### **Equality and the law**

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Disability Equality Duty (2005), Equality Act (2006) and the Equality Act (2010).

#### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of a 'protected characteristic.'

The protected characteristics are:

Sex

Race

Disability

Religion or belief

Sexual orientation

Gender reassignment

Pregnancy or maternity

A person's age is also a protected characteristic in relation to employment, and in regard to the provision for goods and services. It does not however apply to pupils, and so the school is free to arrange pupils in classes based on their age group with materials appropriate to them.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to public bodies, and schools including both LA maintained and Academies. The school must have due regard to the need to

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act
- Advance equality and opportunity between people who share a prohibited characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Having due regard in this context means that when significant decisions are being taken, thought must be given to the equality implications.

## **Race Equality**

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Under our specific duty we will

- Prepare an Equality Plan which identifies our race equality goals
- Assess the impact of our policies, including this Plan, on pupils, staff and parents by ethnicity including, in particular, the achievement levels of these pupils
- Monitor the impact our plans and policies have on such pupils, staff and parents towards raising the achievement of minority ethnic groups

## **Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities.

Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **Legal duties**

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment

Under our specific duty we will

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability Equality Scheme identifying our disability equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years

### **Gender Equality**

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 places a general and specific duty on schools to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people. Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Promote equality between men and women
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment

Under our specific duty we will

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Gender Equality Scheme identifying our gender equality goals and actions to meet them
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years

### **Sexual Orientation**

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

### **Community cohesion**

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

### **Consultation and involvement**

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan

- Feedback from Parent View, parents' evening, informal conversations with parents and formal parent consultation
- Input from staff
- Feedback from the school council and PSHE lessons
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of Governors**

- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on the protected characteristics
- The Governing Body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of the protected characteristics
- The Governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils
- The Governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability, gender, religion and belief or the fact that they are pregnant or are undergoing gender reassignment

### **The role of the Executive Headmistress**

- It is the Executive Headmistress' role to implement the school's Equality Plan and she is supported by the Governing Body in doing so
- It is the Executive Headmistress' role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- The Executive Headmistress ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- The Executive Headmistress promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life
- The Executive Headmistress treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness

### **The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching**

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy and objectives
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Executive Headmistress
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

### **Tackling discrimination**

Harassment or victimisation on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Staff and Governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

**Direct discrimination** occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Senior Leader where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Associate Head of School and racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body and local authority on a termly basis.

### **What is a discriminatory incident?**

**Harassment** is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as "unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person"

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably, than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done ("a prohibited act") in connection with the Act e.g. making an allegation of discrimination.

### **Types of discriminatory incident**

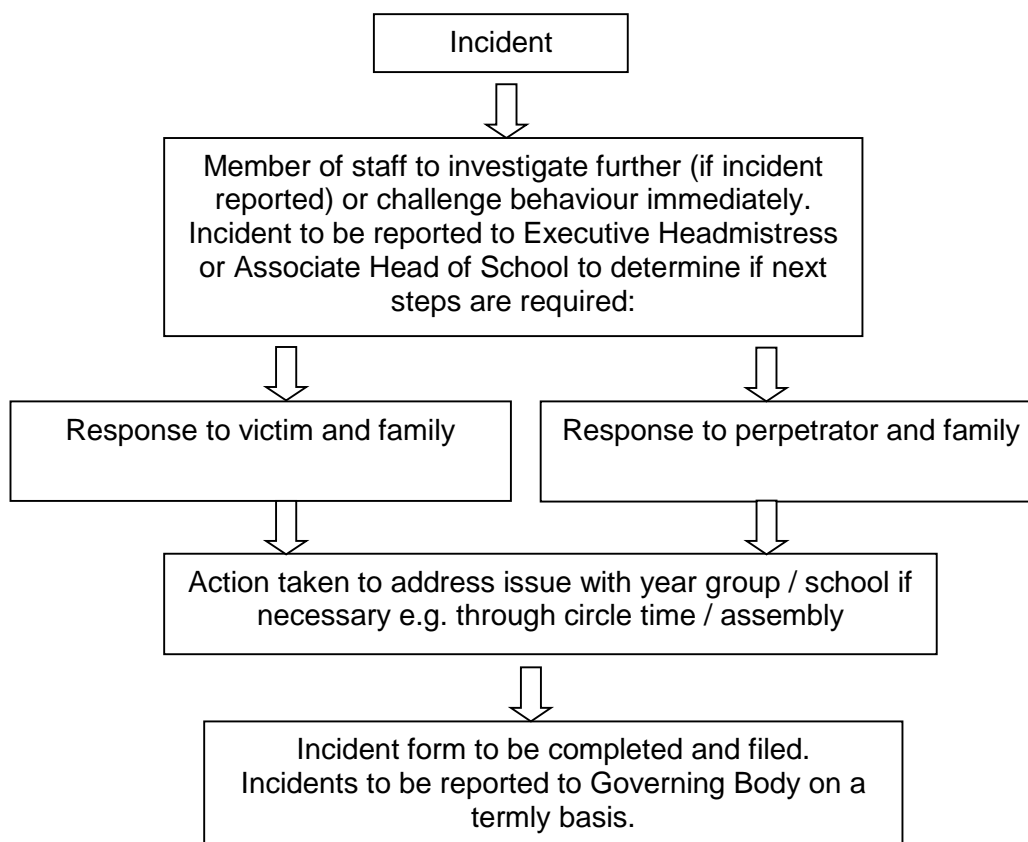
Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to and reporting incidents**

It should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well being of the whole school.





### **Review of progress and impact**

Our Governing Body has agreed the objectives. We have a rolling programme for reviewing our school policies and their impact. In line with legislative requirements, we will review progress against our Equality objectives annually and review the entire plan and accompanying action plan on a four-year cycle.

We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupil progress. As part of this process, we regularly monitor achievement by ethnicity, gender and disability, to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress, and take appropriate action to address any gaps.

### **Publishing the objectives and demonstrating compliance**

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to prepare and publish objectives, we will

- Publish our information and objectives on the school website
- Raise awareness of the objectives through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available

The school had until the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 to publish their initial information and first set of objectives. After this the information that demonstrates how the school is complying will need to be published at least annually, and information on objectives at least every four years. Publication of information in future years should include evidence of the progress made against the objectives set. The information released does not simply have to be statistical data but can for example include minutes from Governing Body meetings that demonstrates progress.

## St Mary's Catholic Primary School - Equality Plan (September 2015)

Equality Strand	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible for implementing?	What are the timeframes?	Early success indicators
Disability Equality Duty	Promote disability issues through external speakers (e.g GOSH outreach workers, paralympians, 'Just Different') and children to learn a prayer in British Sign Language.	Pupils surveys before and after activities to check if awareness has increased.	Associate Head of School	Sept 2015 - Aug 2016	Children have an increased understanding of how some people have different needs, different ways of communicating and different ways of achieving.