



# Equality Policy

Policy created September 2019

Reviewed in September 2024

Review date: 09/2025 or sooner if required

## Sensitivity: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

1. We welcome our duties under the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005; the Race Relations 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006; and the expectation in the Equality Bill 2009 that we should promote equality, diversity and good relations, in relation to age (as appropriate), faith and religion, gender reassignment and sexual and gender identity.

The Equality Act 2010 and schools (May 2014) is the document referred to for DfE advice.

Protected characteristics:

- sex
- race
- disability
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy or maternity

2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We welcome the proposals set out in Equality Bill: making it work, published by the Government Equalities Office in June 2009, that from 2011 onwards we should publish a statement of equality objectives for our school and should report on progress towards achieving them.
4. We recognise these duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters' framework, and that they 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.

### **Ethos: Dignity and respect for ALL**

As a Christian school, we underpin this policy with the belief that all people are made in the image of God and are of equal value and worth. We are called to be entirely 'inclusive' of all, following the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The Church of England guidance for Church of England Schools, '**Valuing All God's Children**' May 2014 is an important document for us in terms of challenging homophobic bullying.

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Our Christian Rainbow values underpin all that we strive to do in our school.

The values of 'HARMONY' and 'JUSTICE' are particularly relevant to this policy and our daily practice.

### **Guiding Principles**

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by seven 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, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their sexual identity

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

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) 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

#### **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

## Sensitivity: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

### **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 and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men

### **Principle 6: We consult and involve widely.**

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

### **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.

## **Action Plans**

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy statement such as this are what make a difference. Accordingly, if necessary, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan setting out the specific equality objectives we shall pursue. The objectives which we identify take into account national and local priorities and issues, as appropriate. We review our action plan annually and report annually on progress towards achieving the equality objectives we have identified.

## **Ethos and Organisation**

We ensure the principles listed 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 exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community

## **Addressing Prejudice and Prejudice-related Bullying**

The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to in paragraphs 1-4:

- 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

There is guidance in the staff handbook on how prejudice-related incidents should be identified, assessed, recorded and dealt with. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly 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**

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented. A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher 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.

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 curriculum and lessons that reflect the principles in paragraph 5 above
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work

## **Information and Resources**

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

## **Religious Observance**

Whilst celebrating our 'distinctiveness' as a Church of England faith school, we respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable request relating to religious observance and practice.

## **Staff Development and Training**

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**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. In particular, we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

### **Safeguarding Equality Statement**

Our school recognises that some children have an increased risk of abuse and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing abuse. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who;

- Have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carer has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

