

St Mary's C of E School

Equality Policy



Date agreed: 22nd March 2016

Signed: HJ Tyreman - Headteacher

Signed Dan Rubens - Chair of governors:

Date for review: March 2018

Rationale

St Mary's C of E School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We are proud of the statements in the school's most recent OFSTED and SIAS inspections that stated:

'The school is a very harmonious community with good relationships throughout that effectively promote learning and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.'
OFSTED June 2012

'St Mary's is a school where children and adults can openly express their views on matters of faith and belief in an atmosphere where opinions are listened to and respected. This has created a distinctive community in which everyone is valued as an individual based on clear Christian values.' SIAS November 2012

We are proud that the school was successful in achieving Inclusive Dyslexia Friendly School status in July 2015 (IDFS).

We see this policy as further defining the school's approach to Equality and aim to sustain and develop our work in this area.

The Governors' Mission statement for the school is:

- Stimulate in **every** child a sense of curiosity and excitement about the world and to encourage them to search for truth, meaning and purpose in life.
- Educate pupils intellectually, socially, morally, aesthetically, physically and spiritually within in a school based on the example of Jesus in the gospels.
- Show pastoral care, encouraging in pupils a sense of commitment, self-reliance, respect for others and a healthy self-esteem.
- Make prayer and worship a real educational experience

We aim to achieve this vision by

- Provide a broad and balance curriculum within a variety of learning environments that **develop individual potential**.
- Provide a secure environment, physically and emotionally, **in which all children are offered equal opportunities and are taught to value their own skills and abilities and those of others.**
- Teach courtesy, good manners and consideration for others
- Encourage pupils to use initiative and persevere in the face of challenging learning circumstances or varied learning outcomes.
- Enable children and to communicate effectively with one another and to frame their own feelings, emotions and experiences in appropriate language in order to support moral and spiritual development and **engender respect for the personal and religious values of others.**

- **Build positive relationships** with our immediate school community, national and international community and for the school to be a hub of learning in the community.

These are developed in our approach to equality for the whole school (including Pre School) which is based on the following key principles:

1. **All learners are 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 and whatever their sexual orientation.
2. **We recognize, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is a strength.** We aim to ensure that the school ethos of respectfulness is shown through celebration of the diversity of our school and wider community. We will take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face, in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation.
3. **We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit St Mary's C of E School**
4. **We foster positive attitudes and relationships.** We actively promote positive attitudes and mutual respect between groups and communities different from each other.
5. **We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.** We want all members of our school community to feel a sense of belonging to and within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate fully in school life.
6. **We observe good equalities practice for our staff.** We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development
7. **We have the highest expectations of all our children.** We expect that all pupils can make good progress and achieve to their highest potential
8. **We work to raise standards for all pupil.** We believe that improving the quality of education for the most vulnerable groups of pupils raises standards across the whole school.

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination , harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as

protected characteristics). This means that schools cannot discriminate against pupils, parents/carer or staff or treat them less favourably because of their sex (gender), race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or pregnancy or maternity. Age and marriage and civil partnership are also “protected characteristics” but are not part of the school provisions related to pupils.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Act requires all public organisations, including schools to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty and two specific duties

1. The “general duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools, to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

2. Two “specific duties”

This requires all public organisations, including schools, to

- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty
- Publish Equality objectives at least every 4 years which are specific and measurable

This policy describes how the school is meeting these statutory duties and is in line with national guidance. It includes information about how the school is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and also provides guidance to staff and outside visitors about our approach to promoting equality.

Appendix 1 is a checklist of key equality considerations

Appendix 2 shows the school’s Equality Objectives for 2016 -2020 in an Equality Action Plan

When developing the policy we took account of the DfE guidance on the Equality Act 2010 and also the Ofsted inspection framework 2012, which places a strong focus on improving the learning and progress of different groups and on closing gaps in standards.

We note that OFSTED has a statutory duty to report on the outcomes and provision for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.

Equality in practise

- We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and exclusions; the way we provide education for our pupils and the way we provide access for pupils to facilities and services.
- We are aware of the Reasonable Adjustment duty for disabled pupils –designed to enhance access and participation to the level of non-disabled pupils and stop disabled children being placed at a disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion or training opportunities.
- We 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 take seriously the need to consider the equality implications when we develop, adapt and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day today life of the school. We make a record of each specific equality consideration and this is available for review if required. (see Appendix 3 Equality Decisions Log)
- We actively promote equality and diversity though the curriculum and by creating an environment which champions respect for all.
- Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and we do not discriminate against pupils or families by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

Behaviour, Exclusions and Attendance

The school Policy on Behaviour – and our rewards, sanctions and exclusions - takes full account of the new duties under the Equality Act. We make reasonable, appropriate and flexible adjustment for pupils with a disability. We closely monitor data on and absence and exclusions from school for evidence of over-representation of different groups and take action promptly to address concerns.

The school challenges all forms of prejudice and prejudice-based bullying, which stand in the way of fulfilling our commitment to inclusion and equality:

- prejudices around disability and special educational needs

- prejudices around race, religion or belief, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia,
- Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
- prejudices around gender and sexual orientation, including homophobic and transphobic attitudes

Challenges are managed through our Anti Bullying policy and incidents displaying any prejudice will be logged (at school or County level) We treat all bullying incidents equally seriously.

We keep a record of different prejudice-related incidents and provide a report to the governors about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how we dealt with them. We review this data termly and take action to reduce incidents.

Advancing equality of opportunity between different groups

We know the needs of our school population very well and collect and analyse data in order to inform our planning and identify targets to achieve improvements.

We have procedures, working in partnership with parents and carers, to identify children who have a disability through our pupil admissions meetings. Our Inclusion co-ordinator is proactive in building trusting relationships with parents to ensure that barriers to learning are effectively overcome and working in partnership with the families involved.

We collect data and monitor progress and outcomes of different groups of pupils and use this data to support school improvement. We take action to close any gaps, for example, for those making slow progress in acquiring age appropriate literacy and number skills.

We collect and analyse data and report to governors on:

- on the school population by gender and ethnicity;
- on the % of pupils identified as having a special educational need and/or disability and by their principal need or disability;
- by year group – in terms of ethnicity, gender and proficiency in English ;
- on inequalities of outcome and participation, related to ethnicity, gender and disability and proficiency in English

We publish an analysis of standards reached by different groups at the end of each key stage:

- FSM and non-FSM
- EAL
- All SEN
- SEN School Action and SEN statement
- SEN statements
- Gifted and Talented

Pupil Premium children

- Free School Meals
- Children in care
- Service children

We also collect, analyse and use data in relation to attendance and exclusions of different groups and use this analysis as an audit of our practise and to inform future action planning.

We are aware that the legislation relates mainly to current but also to future pupils – we will for example, be sufficiently prepared if a Visually Impaired, Hearing impaired or Gypsy Roma Traveller pupil joins our school.

We use a range of teaching strategies that ensures we meet the needs of all pupils

We provide support to pupils at risk of underachieving through well differentiated lessons, effective small group intervention from within school and specialist help as needed. Parents and carers are informed and ways they can help their child are also discussed. All interventions are reviewed regularly to ensure that the intervention is effective for the child.

We are alert and proactive about the potentially damaging impact of negative language in matters such as race, gender, disability and sexuality.

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, for example:

- disabled and non-disabled people

- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys

We ensure equality of access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum, removing barriers to participation where necessary.

We are also implementing an Accessibility Plan 2013-16 designed to: increase the extent to which pupils with disability can participate in the curriculum;

- improve the physical environment and;
- improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

We will take positive and proportionate action to address the disadvantage faced by particular groups of pupils with particular protected characteristics, such as targeted support. The actions will be designed to meet the school's Equality Objectives.

Fostering good relations

- We prepare our pupils for life in a diverse society and ensure that there are activities across the curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils.
- We teach about difference and diversity and the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination through PSHE and citizenship and across the curriculum.
- We use materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender, sexual identity and disability, avoiding stereotyping.
- We promote a whole school inclusive ethos and values that challenge prejudice based discriminatory language, attitudes and behaviour.
- We provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures.
- We include the contribution of different cultures to world history and that promote positive images of people
- We provide opportunities for pupils to listen to a range of opinions and empathise with different experiences

- We promote positive messages about equality and diversity through displays, assemblies, visitors and whole school events

Other ways we address equality issues

- We maintain records of all training relating to Equalities
- Our monitoring records include evaluations of aspects of Equalities
- We keep minutes of meetings where equality issues are discussed
- We have a rolling programme for reviewing all of our school policies in relation to equalities and their impact on the progress, safety and well being of our pupils.
- The implications for equalities of new policies and practices are considered before they are introduced

In order to ensure that the work we are doing on equalities meets the needs

of the whole school community we:

- review relevant feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening
- analyse responses from staff surveys, staff meetings and training events
- review feedback and responses from the children and groups of children, from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school
- analyse issues raised in Annual Reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support;
- ensure that we secure responses and feedback at Governing Body meetings and from the governing body's working groups.

Publishing Equality Objectives (see Equality Action Plan/ School Development Plan)

The objectives which we identify represent our school's priorities and are the outcome of a careful review of and analysis of data and other evidence. They also take into account national and local priorities and issues.

We evaluate our success in meeting the Public Service Equality Duties by the extent to which we achieve improved outcomes for the different groups. We produce Equality data Analysis which inform our discussions about the Equality Objectives.

Our Equality Objectives for 2016 -2020 are:

- To achieve a year on year (over three years) reduction in the progress and attainment gap in English and Mathematics at Ks1 and Ks2 between pupils the school regards as 'vulnerable' and their peers
- All pupils to make at least good progress across KS 1-2 in English and mathematics
- To increase participation by SEND/EAL pupils in after school clubs

As a school we have identified the following groups as 'vulnerable'

- Boys in EYFS and KS1
- Girls – at Ks2 especially middle ability (RAISEonline)
- SEND – Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Dyslexic children – children identified on DST as being on the Dyslexic continuum
- SMEH – Children with Social, Mental, Emotional Health issues
- Pupil Premium children - a focus group in all year groups but with specific attention on EYFS and KS1 for 2016/17
- EAL – Children with English as an Additional Language.

We produce an Equality Action Plan that shows how we will achieve our objectives and key actions for raising attainment for the whole school are detailed in the School Improvement Plan.

Monitoring and reviewing objectives

We review and update our equality objectives every three years and report annually to the governing body on progress towards achieving them.

We involve and consult staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers.

We publish an evaluation of the success in meeting these objectives for parents and carers, on the school website.

Roles and Responsibilities

We expect all members of the school community and visitors to support our commitment to promoting equalities and meeting the requirements of the Equality Act. We will provide guidance and information to enable them to do this.

Governing body

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.

A member of the governing body will have a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

Every governing body committee keeps aspects of the school's commitment to the Equality Duty under review, for example, in terms of standards, curriculum, admissions, exclusions, personnel issues and the school environment. Governors annually review the Equality Policy and evaluate the success of the school's Equalities Work taking account of quantitative evidence (e.g. data) and qualitative evidence (e.g. surveys)

Headteacher and Leadership team

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.

The head teacher, or in her absence the senior teacher, has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating implementation of the policy and for monitoring outcomes. They will have informed knowledge of the Equality Act.

Teaching and Support Staff

All teaching and support staff will:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- deal fairly and professionally with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the school's principles, for example, in providing materials that give positive images in terms of race, gender and disability
- maintain the highest expectations of success for all pupils
- support different groups of pupils in their class through differentiated planning and teaching, especially those who may (sometimes temporarily) find aspects of academic learning difficult
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

We will provide training and guidance on Equalities for all staff new to the school as part of the induction procedure. We will go through the principal expectations and duties of the Equality Act at a whole staff meeting at the start of the school year.

Visitors

All visitors to the school, including parents and carers are expected to support our commitment to equalities and comply with the duties set out in this policy. We will provide guidance and information in school newsletters to enable them to do this.

Equal Opportunities for staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff. As employers the governing body is 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.

The governing body is also concerned to ensure wherever possible that the staffing of the school reflects the diversity of our community. As an employer the governing body strives to ensure there is no discrimination and harassment in employment practice and that equality is actively promoted across all groups within the workforce. This includes procedures for recruitment of staff for the school.

The governing body respects the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

The governing body working with the head teacher will 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.

Monitoring and Reviewing the policy

We review the information about equalities in the policy annually and make adjustments as appropriate. Our review involves pupils, staff, governors and parents and carers.

Disseminating the policy

This Equality Policy along with the Equality Objectives is available on the school website, as paper copies in the school office, as part of induction for new staff and as a summary in the school prospectus.

We ensure that the whole school community knows about the policy, objectives through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications.

Copies of relevant policies and guidance, including those on behaviour, anti-bullying and special educational needs are published on the school website and copies of all policies are available from the school office.

Links to other policies and documentation

Although this policy is the key document for information about our approach to equalities in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are also included in our school development plan, self evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

There are also references in the behaviour, admissions, SEN and anti -bullying policies as well as minutes of meetings involving governors, the whole staff, and the senior leadership team and school council.

Key contacts

Staff responsible for equalities _____

Lead governor _____

APPENDIX ONE

Check list for school staff and governors

- The school collects information on race, disability and gender with regards to both pupils and staff, e.g. pupil achievement, attendance, exclusions and staff training
- This information is used to inform the policies, plans and strategies, lessons, additional support, training and activities the school provides
- The Equality Policy and Plan and Objectives have been shaped by the views, input and involvement of staff, parents, governors , pupils and other stakeholders
- The school publishes information to demonstrate purposeful action on the general duties
- The school analyses Pupil achievement in terms of progress and standards for different groups and takes action when trends or patterns indicate a need
- The school sets Equality Objectives to improve outcomes for vulnerable pupils and monitors progress on reaching these objectives

- The head teacher has responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the policy and monitoring outcomes
- The school ensures that all staff understand and implement the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The school ensures that visitors to the school understand and follow the key requirements of the Equality Policy
- The curriculum includes opportunities for all pupils to understand and celebrate diversity and difference
- All groups of pupils are encouraged to participate in school life and make a positive contribution, e.g. through class assemblies and the school council
- The school monitors bullying and harassment of pupils in terms of difference and diversity (i.e. different groups) and takes action if there is a cause for concern
- Visual displays and multi-media resources reflect the diversity of the school community
- Minority ethnic, disabled and both male and female role models and those of vulnerable groups are promoted positively in lessons, displays and discussions.
- The school environment is increasingly accessible where possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school
- Open evenings and other events which parents, carers and the community attend are held in an accessible part of the school and issues such as language barriers are considered
- The accessibility needs of parents, pupils and staff are considered in the publishing and sending out of information
- The Governing Body is increasingly representative of the community it serves
- Procedures for the election of parent governors are open to candidates and voters who are disabled

APPENDIX TWO EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (including accessibility plan) 20XX-20XX

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	Equality Objectives	Action	How will the impact of the action be monitored?	Who is responsible?	Time frames	Progress commentary
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation						
Advance equality opportunity between different groups						

Foster good relations between different groups						
Accessibility - premises						

This Equality Plan sets out the Equalities Objectives 2013-2015 and is referenced in our school development plan

APPENDIX THREE EQUALITY DECISION LOG

Date	Area being considered	Issues arising	Outcome