

Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Primary School

Equality and Diversity (Equal Opportunities) Policy



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1. Introduction

The Local Education Authority, Academy Trust, Governing Body and Headteacher bear a legal responsibility to promote an environment in which no-one connected with the school is discriminated against because of his / her social class, gender, race, culture, disability, learning difficulties, age or sexual orientation, and to work towards elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities for all.

All schools have a statutory duty to ensure that all pupils receive their entitlement to the National Curriculum. Schools have a legal duty to make provision for pupils with special educational needs.

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) requires that all schools should have a formal policy for dealing with equality and diversity.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires all schools to have a Race Equality Policy.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations, which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and to publish equality objectives.

Department for Education (DfE) guidance: The Equality Act 2010 and schools.

Document should also take into account our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Equality Act 2010, which introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty and protects people from discrimination.

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination under The Equality Act 2010 can be direct or indirect and the Act also prohibits harassment and victimisation. The ways in which discrimination, harassment and victimisation might become illegal often depend on the type of protected characteristic involved and on the exceptions within the Act. The key sections are relevant to schools, as defined under the Education Act 1996, not to early years settings which are not maintained nursery schools. It should also be noted that victimising a student by reason of protected characteristics amongst their parents or siblings is also generally unlawful.

The governing body of a school must not discriminate against:

- a child applying to be admitted to the school;
- existing students;
- job applicants;
- existing members of staff;

on the grounds of their protected characteristic (that is sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or marital status).

The Equality Act 2010 lists nine protected groups:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity/Race
- Gender
- Gender reassignment (Transgender)
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion and Beliefs
- Sexual orientation

2. Aims and Values:

Equality of opportunity in school is about providing equality and excellence for all in order to promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of the school community – pupils, staff, governors and parents.

We strive to place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the school as an individual. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances.

The aim of our Policy is to provide equal opportunities to all by:

- continuing to develop a positive environment which is inviting, approachable, friendly and happy to everyone underpinned by the teaching of Christ and Diocese guidelines
- helping all pupils to develop a sense of their own personal and cultural identity and respect the identity of others
- having high expectations of every individual regardless of social background, sex, ability, race or culture
- encouraging every pupil to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to participate in a multi-cultural society and interdependent world
- offering every pupil a broad based social and academic education whilst reflecting the national requirements
- allowing equal access to benefits, facilities and services offered by our school to all opposing all forms of prejudice, discrimination and racism.

3. Our Commitment:

At Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic School Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. Therefore, as a school community, we are committed to promoting:

The uniqueness of the individual

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are, therefore, committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity afforded to a child of God.

The search for excellence

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community which flows from diversity of age, gender, sexuality, racial and social origins, abilities and disabilities, culture and religion. We are committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

The education of the whole person

We offer children the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony.

Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help pupils to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

The education of all

We have the duty to care for all, with preferential consideration for the poor, and to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that all, pupils and staff, are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential.
- Ensuring that all recruitment, employment, development, promotion and training systems are fair to all, regardless of social class, gender, race, culture, disability, learning difficulties, or sexual orientation.
- Helping all pupils to develop a sense of their own personal and cultural identity and to respect the identities of others.
- Providing access to a variety of learning styles and resources and encouraging all children to develop autonomy and responsibility for their own learning.
- Encouraging every pupil to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to participate in a multi-cultural society and an interdependent world.
- Providing an environment that is physically safe and secure, valuing and building on all children's experiences and encouraging them to share their anxieties if something is wrong
- Opposing all forms of prejudice, discrimination and racism.
- Encouraging the challenge of stereotypes.
- The recognition of discrimination.

These commitments are the responsibility of everyone in our school. We believe that Equal Opportunities is not about tolerance, it is about a genuinely open attitude which values everyone. Equal Opportunities means opening up access for every child and family to full participation within the learning environment where we can 'Learn and Grow Together, Rooted in Christ'.

We believe everyone in the school has a right to:

- have his / her talents recognised.
- be valued as an individual.
- have a sense of his / her own identity.
- have his / her culture and religion respected.
- be encouraged and enabled to fulfil his / her role in the school community.
- succeed.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring the values of the school are shared, understood and lived by everyone.
- Enjoying all children as individuals with time taken to understand them.
- Exploring differences as appropriate, developing an understanding and acceptance of individuals.
- Implementing a positive approach to behaviour management and monitoring its impact.
- Monitoring the attainment and progress of all pupils by ethnic group and by gender, language and disability.
- Ensuring all curriculum planning takes account of the ethnic background and language needs of all pupils.
- Implementing staff recruitment and selection procedures which are consistent with the race relations Code of Practice in Employment.
- Ensuring that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and applied equally to all pupils.
- Monitoring exclusions of all groups ensuring that all pupils are treated equally.

4. Responsibilities

Role of Governors

In supporting this policy statement the governing body has shown its commitment to equal opportunities and racial equality and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that all members of the school community are treated fairly and with equality.

The governing body will seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against because of social class, gender, race, culture, disability, learning difficulties, age or sexual orientation, when applying to join the school. The governors will take all reasonable steps to ensure the school environment gives access to people with physical disabilities.

The remit of each of the governing body committees includes the requirement to comply with current legislation and the school's duty regarding equality and discrimination with respect to sex, gender reassignment, race disability, sexual orientation, religion and age.

Role of Headteacher

The Headteacher will implement the policy and its related procedures and strategies.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and apply these guidelines fairly in all cases. Staff will have access to appropriate training.

The Headteacher will ensure that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when considered for employment or training opportunities.

The Headteacher will promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum and promote respect of other people in all aspects of school life.

The Headteacher will treat all allegations of incidents of unfair treatment and any racist incidents with due seriousness and will take action in cases of discrimination.

The Headteacher will develop and update the school's Equality and Diversity Policy in consultation with the governors as appropriate.

The Headteacher will arrange for the appropriate training of staff.

Role of staff within the school

It is the responsibility of staff to:

- Develop equal opportunities and racial awareness in their teaching and learning
- Deal with racist incidents and know how to challenge racial and other forms of bias and stereotyping
- Record and report any racial incidents which may arise in the school
- Promote equal opportunities and good race relations
- Keep up to date with equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation
- Make visitors aware of the school's Equality and Diversity Policy

Definitions of Racist /Harassment/Behaviour

The Commission for Racial equality defines racist behaviour as:

'any hostile or offensive act by a person of one racial group or ethnic origin against a person of another racial group or ethnic group, or incitement to commit such an act in such a manner:

- that it interferes with the peace and comfort of the aggrieved person;

- that the aggrieved person fears for their safety;
- that the quality of life of the person aggrieved is reduced.'

Racist incidents:

Following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson) Report, it is widely accepted that a racist incident 'is any incident that is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person'. If a person reports a racist incident then it will be treated as such until the investigation is complete.

Racist incidents which may involve pupils, students, teachers and ancillary staff include:

Disrespect and Non Co-Operation

- Ridicule of an individual's cultural differences, e.g. food, music, dress, language etc.
- Showing ignorance of a pupil's cultural practices, in a way which makes the pupil feel uncomfortable, belittled or harassed.
- Refusal to co-operate with other people because of their ethnic origin.

Verbal Harassment

- Derogatory remarks, name calling, insults and 'racist' jokes.
- Racist comments in the course of discussions.
- Verbal abuse and threats.

Physical Harassment

- Violent attacks or physical intimidation of children and adults of different ethnic backgrounds.

Other incidents

- Damage to a person's property.
- Racist graffiti or any other graffiti relating to an identifiable individual.
- Bringing materials that contain racist comments such as comics or magazines into school.
- Attempts to recruit other pupils and students into racist organisations.
- Incitement of others to behave in a racist or discriminatory way.

Breaches of the Policy

All breaches of this policy will be considered carefully by the Headteacher and if necessary the Governing Body.

Any necessary action will be taken after due consideration of the breach of the policy. Advice will be sought from the Local Authority as necessary.

All incidents will be acknowledged and talked through with the children/staff involved, taking note of the age and understanding of the child where appropriate.

Procedure in the event of an incident

- **Small issues**

Members of staff (or a student teacher if he/she is the witness) will deal with the incident and remain aware. The class teacher will be informed if not already aware.

- **More serious incidents**

The class teacher / student teacher directly involved with child at time of incident will talk with the child, parent and Headteacher. The offender will receive appropriate input to reduce the likelihood of any repetition of the incident.

This will happen by:

- Acknowledging the incident, expressing disapproval.
- Giving support to the victim, apologising for the incident.
- Identifying the racist / harassing behaviour.
- Talking with the perpetrator while maintaining pastoral support to the victim.
- Explaining to those responsible as well as any onlookers what is unacceptable about the incident
- Considering appropriate action, from the range of sanctions outlined in the school's behaviour policy, and following the school's procedure for recording the incident.
- Contacting parents / guardians as appropriate, explaining the action taken and relating this to the school's behaviour policy.

Any racial incident or harassment perpetrated by a parent or visitor, or where they are the victim of an incident, will be considered in line with the procedures.

The school's complaints procedure may be used to resolve any problem which an individual believes has not been dealt with satisfactorily by the school staff.

5. Admissions, Attendance, Discipline and Exclusion

The admissions process will be monitored to ensure that it is administered fairly and equitably to all pupils.

Comprehensive information about pupils' ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs etc will be included in admissions forms but will not be used to the disadvantage of any individual.

We take steps to ensure that the admission process is fair and equitable to all pupils from all groups.

The school monitors pupil attendance by groups (including ethnicity and gender) and uses data to develop strategies to address poor attendance.

We aim to identify and adopt good practice strategies in order to reduce differences in rates of exclusion between ethnic groups. Our procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair and are applied equally to all pupils irrespective of ethnicity or gender. All processes for excluding a pupil is free from racial discrimination and our strategies to re-integrate excluded pupils accommodate the needs of all pupils.

6. Equal Opportunities related to Attainment, Assessment and Progress

Staff will have high expectations of all pupils.

The monitoring of pupil performance by gender and ethnicity enables the identification of underachievement and the school will act on the basis of this monitoring.

Assessment is used appropriately for all pupils. The school will ensure, when possible that assessment is free from cultural, social and gender bias.

We take all opportunities to celebrate the achievement of all our pupils. All pupils have equal access to curriculum enrichment activities and programmes. Individualised support is provided wherever necessary.

We take steps to ensure that there is no racial discrimination for students on work experience within our school or in any aspect of the curriculum, which involves outside bodies.

7. Equal Opportunities related to Attitudes and Behaviour

Discipline and behaviour management procedures will be fair and applied equally to all.

All staff will operate consistent systems of reward and discipline.

Clear procedures will be in place to ensure that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with properly, firmly and consistently.

All racist incidents will be reported to: **Mrs C. Ashcroft – Deputy Head**. The Headteacher, **Mrs D. Enstone**, reports any racial incidents to Governors at termly meeting.

Pupils, staff and parents/carers will be made aware of procedures for dealing with harassment.

All staff will foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among pupils from all groups underpinned by the teachings of Christ.

8. Equal Opportunities related to Personal Development and Pastoral Care

Pastoral support will take account of religious and cultural background and experience.

The school will provide support for pupils with English as an additional language.

All pupils will be provided with advice which avoids stereotyped assumptions.

Support will be given both to the victims and the perpetrators of harassment.

9. Equal Opportunities related to Teaching and Learning

Display materials will positively promote images of a variety of races and groups of people with observable differences working co-operatively.

Teaching will be responsive to pupils' different learning styles.

Resources and displays will reflect the experience and backgrounds of all pupils and the need to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

Teaching will challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

10. Equal Opportunities related to the Curriculum

The curriculum will prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

All subjects will contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs of all pupils.

Each area of the curriculum will promote equality and positive attitudes towards diversity.

The content of the curriculum will reflect diversity and encourages pupils to challenge prejudice and stereotypes.

The curriculum will ensure the inclusion of all e.g. boys and girls, ethnic minority pupils, gifted and talented pupils, pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

All pupils will have equality of access to the curriculum.

Extra-curricular activities and events will cater for the interests and capabilities of all pupils
Where appropriate in the curriculum, displays of artefacts and work based on festivals from a range of faiths will be made.

Our range of books will include stories from different cultures.

Willing families will be invited into school to speak about festivals or send in items such as foods enjoyed by themselves at various times.

The catering service will provide a sufficiently wide range of foods for all dietary requirements to be satisfied.

11. Equal Opportunities related to Staffing Recruitment and Professional Development

The school will adhere to selection and recruitment procedures which are fair, promote equality and are in line with statutory duties.

New staff will be made familiar with the Equality and Diversity Policy as part of the induction programme. Regular professional development activities will be available to all staff to support their practice in relation to this policy.

12. Equal Opportunities related to the Partnership with Parents and Community

All parents/ cares will be encouraged to participate at all levels in the life of the school and full support for this participation, should it be required, will be offered.

The school will work in partnership with parents/carers and the community to address incidents and to develop positive attitudes to difference and cultural diversity.

13. Key personnel

Head Teacher - **Mrs D. Enstone**

Deputy Head - **Mrs C Ashcroft**

Chair of Governors - **Rev. A Franklin**

14. Monitoring Arrangements

The Headteacher will provide termly reports to the Governing Body

The policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Body (or nominated committee) at least every 4 years

This policy can be found: <http://www.ol-wayside.solihull.sch.uk>