



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

St Mary Magdalene CE Primary School provides education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by diversity. We strive to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school reflects the diversity of ALL members of the school community, where everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and fairness. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

We expect that our school will be a place where:

- There is a warm, welcoming, happy but safe-to-fail atmosphere that is secure, stimulating and supportive of learning
- High self-esteem is nurtured and children feel confident, valued and proud to be themselves
- Positive relationships are fostered between children, staff and parents; and bullying and anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated
- Children achieve to the highest level possible for them; achievement by others is celebrated; different intelligences are recognised; children can pursue many different interests; and achieve a broad knowledge of the world to equip them for life
- Children are encouraged to be creative, and to express themselves through a curriculum that holds creativity in high regard

2 AIMS OF THE POLICY**The aims of this policy are:**

- To educate and develop all our pupils, whatever their sex, colour, culture, origin or ability, to attain the highest levels possible for them
- To prepare pupils to be full citizens of society
- To ensure that all pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum
- To challenge racism and celebrate diversity
- To address the issue of stereotyping and to ensure that teaching styles and materials selected do not reinforce stereotypes
- To create a fair and just school community, that promotes social inclusion, community cohesion and equality, that respects diversity and which challenges and acts upon discrimination and inequality including bullying.

There are some areas that affect pupils and require special thought. This policy addresses the following: Admissions, Curriculum, Language, The hidden curriculum, Exclusion and Discrimination

3 OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COHESION

- We will not tolerate harassment of any kind.
- We are committed to combating ALL forms of discrimination.
- We recognise that monitoring and evaluation of equality is essential to ensure pupils are not being disadvantaged, and that monitoring leads to action planning.
- We aim to be an inclusive employer that positively values the contribution of all employees. Through both our employment policies and strategies, we aim to achieve equality for all sections of the workforce and the community we serve.
- We will work towards eliminating all discrimination, on the grounds of race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexuality (including sexual orientation), age, religion and belief. We believe that all pupils, employees and other service users should be treated with dignity and respect at all times and we will not tolerate bullying, harassment or victimisation of any groups or individuals.

We will be an equality champion and community leader in:

- Promoting equality, for example by assessing the impact of our policies on different groups
- Challenging and eradicating discrimination, for example , by acting quickly to deal with all bullying, including that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying
- Promoting community cohesion at all times.

4 OUR PRINCIPLES

- To promote equality, diversity and cohesion within the local community. We believe that our school needs to reflect all the communities and people it serves.
- To challenge discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, age, disability, sexuality (including sexual orientation), religion or belief.
- Our vision for equality and diversity goes beyond establishing processes to achieve change. We will monitor progress made towards meeting objectives to:
 - take adequate steps to prevent discrimination
 - take decisive action when discrimination occurs
 - take steps to promote equality, diversity and cohesion
- All our staff will consistently challenge all put-downs, harassment, name-calling, bullying, threatening or hurtful behaviour (physical and psychological) that violates a group or individual and leads to marginalisation, exclusion, and feelings of powerlessness and worthlessness because of: colour, culture, ethnicity, faith, religion, belief, national origin, national status, disability or impairment, perception of sexuality including sexual orientation, gender, marital status, socio-economic background, age, responsibility for dependants and trade union membership
- We acknowledge The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry definition of a racist incident is "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".
- We also recognise that all pupils may experience harassment and bullying and in tackling these issues in school, we use the same definition that such an incident is perceived to be harassment or bullying by the victim or another person, until proven otherwise.
- We will strive to be a 'listening school'. We listen to all our school community members including pupils, parents, staff, visitors, wider community members, stakeholders and partners. We take seriously all experiences of bullying and hurtful behaviour resulting from bullying such as racism. We invite all our pupils in particular to discuss any bullying in detail.
- We will continue to develop preventative measures to deal with discrimination including promoting human rights and equality through the PSHME curriculum and in particular focusing on the rights of the child, the right to education and the right to be safe.
- Our SEN policy and practice demonstrates our commitments to pupil participation, working with parents, appropriately allocating resources to ensure full curriculum access.
- Our partnerships with parents, governors and the wider community are essential to promote equality, diversity and community cohesion.
- We will encourage diversity and eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination through a full range of human resource policies and procedures in particular in the areas of recruitment, training and development and promotion.
- We will monitor staff in post, all applicants, short listed candidates and candidates appointed
- Recognise that staff have rights as employees to work in a supportive, safe and harassment free environment and that staff have individual and collective responsibility to value and respect each other's contributions.
- We promote an environment where standards of conduct are of the highest level and to ensure that no one is harassed, bullied or victimised.

5 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COHESION IN PRACTICE**Racial Discrimination**

We have a general duty in law to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people from different racial groups

Admissions

We should not refuse to admit pupils or place special conditions, or allow unfavourable treatment because of a pupil's race, gender or disability.

Curriculum

All pupils are entitled to equal access to the curriculum. This means that barriers need to be overcome should there be reasons why pupils find certain aspects difficult. Each case needs to be considered independently given this proviso. After school clubs are open to all pupils.

Staff must be constantly aware that their own expectations affect the achievement, behaviour and status of each pupil and we must ensure that we set challenging targets for children for whom English is a second language.

Staff must ensure that resources used in teaching are multicultural and non-sexist, containing positive images of all groups. Variety should be found in stories, morals and information given to children. Please see Appendix 3 for points to take into account when undertaking medium and short term planning.

Language

We view linguistic diversity positively and value language and dialect spoken in school. Children will be allowed to use their home language in school but it should never be used to exclude others.

The Hidden Curriculum

We are aware that there might be some misconceptions amongst pupils, parents and teachers – for example:

- Certain subjects are not suitable for them (they are boys/girls subjects...)
- That girls and women are inferior to boys
- That special needs pupils have 'problems' and cannot tackle some curriculum areas
- That pupils are somehow quirky or difficult because of their race or religion

Discrimination

All forms of discrimination within the school will be treated seriously. A careful note will be kept of incidents, taking place in any part of school – playground, classroom or shared areas. It will always be made clear to offending individuals that such behaviour is unacceptable.

We intend to monitor sanctions and exclusions applied to children to ensure that there are no disparities in rates of punishment across racial groups.

Pupils

In the first incidence the behaviour will be dealt with by the class teacher, support assistant or lunchtime supervisor. Any subsequent incidents will be referred to a member of the SMT and depending upon the nature and number of incidents, parents may also be involved. Racist symbols or badges will not be tolerated in school.

Staff

All staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. They will also be vigilant both in the playground and around school for any type of racist or sexist incident from overt name-calling to the more subtle forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences.

The Head Teacher

The head has overall responsibility within the school for implementing the policy and will be the named person responsible for taking disciplinary action in any case of racial discrimination. The head is also responsible for reporting racist incidents to the governing body.

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities.

APPENDIX 1 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND
--

There are several laws relating to this area, all of which should influence our practice in school:

- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000) makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person on racial grounds in recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, terms and conditions of employment or dismissal.
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person on grounds of sex or marital status
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 brings in new laws and measures aimed at ending the discrimination which many disabled people face. This was amended by the SEN Disability Act 2001 to ensure that schools do not 'treat pupils less favourably' and make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage
- The Equal Pay Act 1970(amended 1984) requires employers to give equal treatment in respect of pay, terms of contract and employment to men and women doing the same or broadly the same work.

APPENDIX 2 – SEXUAL HARRASSMENT
--

Two recent legal definitions state that sexual harassment is:

- “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work”
- “repeated and unwanted verbal or sexual advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminating remarks made by someone in the workplace which are offensive to the worker involved, which cause the worker to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised or harassed or which interfere with the worker’s job performance, undermine job security or create a threatening or intimidating environment”.

Harassment might occur between pupils, staff, or between members of staff and pupils. Perceived harassment should be discussed with the head teacher or one of the assistant head teachers if preferred and the necessary action will be taken.

APPENDIX 3 – CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Please have regard to the following checklist when undertaking planning:

- Is each area of the curriculum planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes towards diversity and difference?
- Do pupils have the opportunity to explore concepts and issues relating to equality?
- Are you taking steps to ensure that all pupils have access to the mainstream curriculum by taking into account cultural backgrounds, linguistic needs and learning styles?
- Do resources and displays portray positive images of different people and cultures?
- Can resources be used to challenge stereotypes and racism across the curriculum?
- Do you create an environment where all pupils can contribute fully and feel valued?
- Do you use a range of sensitive teaching strategies so that pupils can appreciate the value of learning together?
- Are all pupils appropriately supported in assessments so that they are able to show what they know and what they can achieve?