

Equality Policy



Policy updated by Mrs Leech and Miss Taylor: January 2024

Policy approved by Governors: January 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Taylor".

Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mr M Grogan".

Headteacher

Policy shared with staff and shared on the school website: January 2024

'Never settle for less than your best'

EQUALITY POLICY

Our school motto

Never settle for less than your best.

Our Vision

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, each member of our community will flourish as resilient, respectful and adaptable individuals prepared for life's journey. Along the way we will encourage and inspire each other to continue growing as beacons of light in our own lives and the wider world.

Our Mission

St George's Central seeks to provide quality education rooted in the Christian faith, serving the spiritual, moral and educational needs of the community of which it is part.

Aims

The school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the principles outlined in this policy. To ensure these principles are carried out we have set three Equality Objectives which will be monitored by the Governing Body and reviewed each year:

- To ensure implementation of Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular opportunities, with particular reference to issues of equality and diversity
- To increase the extent to which all pupils, including in particular those with protected characteristics (PC) as defined by the Equality Act, 2010, feel valued and confident, and in consequence are more likely to make at least good progress.

Rationale

The basic equality between all human beings has always been fundamental to Christian belief and teaching. St George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery acknowledges and welcomes diversity among pupils, staff, governors and visitors. Our Equality Policy outlines the commitment of the staff and governors to promote equality. This involves tackling the barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes so that there is equality of access and the diversity within the school community is celebrated and valued. We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community.

Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. At St George's Central CE Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people the same, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs/faith tradition, sexual orientation, age or any other of the protected characteristics (Single Equalities Act 2010). We promote the principles of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in our school.

Mainstreaming Equality into Policy and Practice

Teaching and learning

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. Furthermore, we aim to foster good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We aim to achieve this by:

- 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;
- Seeking to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;

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- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.
- Regularly consider the ways in which the taught and wider curriculums will help to promote awareness of the rights of individuals, and of protected characteristics of individuals, and develop the skills of participation and responsible action in challenging prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum. This includes teaching in RE, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, but also activities in other curriculum areas. For example, as part of teaching and learning in English/reading, pupils will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures.
- Working with our local community. This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.
- Holding assemblies and national awareness days dealing with relevant issues.
- Developing links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.

Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, in accordance with the LA framework, 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

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 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 Equality Act 2010:

Race Equality

The school has due regard to the need to:

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

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Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare an Equality Plan which includes our written policy for race equality;
- 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 and Accessibility Plan.

Definition of disability:

The 2010 Equality Act 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'.

Legal duties

The Equality Act 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 people with disabilities and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of people with disabilities that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities;
- Encouraging participation in public life by people with disabilities;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with disabilities, 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 Equality Act 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 the genders of pupils and staff, this includes but is not limited to female, male, transgender and non-binary.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between genders.

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 makes provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

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 do this by using the following to shape the policy:

- Feedback from the annual parent questionnaire, parents' evening, 'Three Stars and a Wish' questionnaires;
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings/INSET;
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, discussion with pupils on children's attitudes to self and school;
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress, mentoring and support.

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Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation 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. 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/headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the headteacher and incidents related to the protected characteristics reported to the governing body on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socioeconomic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti. Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their age, disability, race, 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 is made clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body has delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to oversee the development of this policy and to ensure its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The governors seek to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability. They 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 socioeconomic background, race, gender or disability. They will ensure that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

The Headteacher will ensure the implementation of the school's Equality Policy and is supported by the governing body in doing so. They will ensure that all staff are aware of this policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations. The headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities. They will promote the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promote respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life. The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

Staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Policy. They 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 headteacher. Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

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Monitoring the effectiveness of the Policy

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a single Equality Plan we will:

- Publish this policy on the school website;
- Raise awareness of the policy through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications;
- Make sure hard copies are available on request.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed every year or when the need arises.

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