

St Luke's RC Primary School

Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy June 2020



“At St. Luke’s School we follow the example of Christ. By being God’s disciples here on Earth. We strive to be the best that we can be. To do the best that we can do and to make God proud.”

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Background

This policy is written in light of the 2010 Equality Act. However, St Luke's RC Primary School is a Voluntary Aided school with a registered, religious character there are some general exceptions to the Act which are followed by our school. These are identified in Appendix 1.

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Introduction

There were a number of statutory duties that the school was required to meet prior to the Equality Act 2010. As such, with the implementation of this act and the harmonisation of previous legislation, this policy will refer to the Equality Act 2010 and its various provisions as the legislative framework through which this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy will operate.

In the development of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy St Luke's RC Primary School has moved from a focus on an individual response to an approach that builds on **disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation** considerations from the start and at every level of the school, at strategic, policy, management and classroom level. We will demonstrate what we have done and what we plan to do to improve opportunities and outcomes for pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. This policy will be monitored and delivered through the governors' role, School Improvement and Self Evaluation process.

We will ensure that every pupil irrespective of the protected characteristics is able to achieve high standards and that strategies are in place to tackle under-achievement. We will ensure that every pupil has access to the necessary support required to enable them to achieve their highest potential. We will ensure that the school's procedures for disciplining pupils and managing behaviour are fair, effective and equitable.

Our intention is to ensure that the adults working or volunteering in the school include as much as possible a balanced representation of the local and wider community. We believe that this will provide good role models for pupils from all backgrounds.

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy includes our action plan which sets out how we intend to implement the policy over the next three years.

St Luke's RC Primary School sees this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy as a living document and we will continuously review the action plan in consultation with pupils, staff, parents, carers, governors and all other stakeholders where possible. We believe they need to be involved from the very start and their involvement will inform the preparation, development, publication, review and reporting of the policy and action plan to ensure that we meet the needs of people from different backgrounds.

We at St Luke's RC Primary School are aware of our public sector duty to:

- eliminating prohibited conduct
- advancing equality of opportunity
- fostering good relations

In compiling this school policy the following documents have been consulted for advice and guidance:

1. Single Equality act 2010: advice for school leaders.

2. The Equality Act 2010: Technical guidance for schools in England (Equality and Human Rights commission)
3. Promoting fundamental values as part of SMSC in schools (DFE November 2014)
4. The SEND Code of Practice 2014
5. Working together to safeguard children 2018
6. Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils 2012: Technical guidance (Equality and Human Rights commission)
7. Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (February 2014 DfE)

School context

This is a larger than average sized school serving an urban area, close to Salford city centre. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently below the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and around 12% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. 2% of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Almost all of our children are baptised Roman Catholic. The incidence of pupils entering or leaving school part way through their education is very low.

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all children living on our local area. We believe that all children, including those identified as having Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of school life. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through SEND support A, B and C is below the national average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs/EHCP is below the national average.

We believe that all children should be equally valued in school. We will strive to ensure that children with SEND are not treated less favourably and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe, healthy and happy. We want children to achieve their best, engage fully in the activities of the school and make successful transitions into adulthood.

St Luke's RC Primary School is an inclusive school. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners which take account of their valued life experiences and needs.

We believe in equality of opportunity for all learners whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and achievement of different groups of learners, particularly those that are vulnerable in some way which may include:

- Girls and boys
- Disadvantaged children
- Minority ethnic and faith groups
- Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
- Learners who needs support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)

- Learners with special educational or additional needs including dyslexia, ASD, ADHD
- Learners who are disabled
- Those who are looked after by the local authority
- Others such as those who are sick, those who are young carers, those who are in families under stress
- Any learners who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion

Structure of our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

This policy document is designed to give a background to St Luke's RC Primary School in respect of the protected characteristics in both education and service provision.

Recruitment and employment issues with regard to staff may be referenced but these are covered in more detail under a separate policy.

Therefore, we have set out below:

- The definitions in respect of each of the protected equality characteristics
- Our commitment for each of the protected equality characteristics
- Our headline achievements and our objectives for each of the protected equality characteristics

We have then set out our key approaches and tools to help us achieve these aims including:

- Our consultation and involvement strategy
- Our accountability processes for the policy
- Our commitment to publication and public access
- Our monitoring and review processes

Specific Equality Areas

Disability

What do we mean by Disability Equality?

We recognise that a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their disability.

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy incorporates our commitment and actions on disability equality. It demonstrates our commitment to addressing disability equality in our decision making and the delivery of education.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for disabled pupils, staff and other users of our services so they can have equal access to all our school and its services. This policy is a statement of our commitment and shows clearly how we will work over the next three years to achieve our goal.

We will continue to review our policies, practices and procedures so that they do not adversely affect anyone because of their disability. By also building this into our curriculum, working and procurement processes we will expect others to do the same.

Our achievements

- We have four accessible entry and exit points located throughout school.
- We have a dedicated area for changing and personal hygiene.
- We have disabled and adapted toilet facilities for adults and children.
- We make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of disabled adults and children (see Accessibility plan).
- We have purchased auxiliary aids and resources to support the needs of some of our pupils.
- Within classes we have raised awareness of difference, diversity and specific SEND conditions e.g. autism and dyslexia.
- School is Dyslexia Friendly.
- Regular assemblies are held to encourage the understanding of difference and embrace diversity.
- We will provide information in alternative formats upon request.

Our objectives (what we plan to do)

We have identified a number of specific actions designed to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. We have committed to:

- Working towards becoming an emotionally friendly school which will raise awareness of disabilities throughout school.
- To begin to embrace national awareness days.
- To remain progressive.

Gender

What do we mean by Gender Equality?

We recognise that a person's gender refers to the fact that they are male or female.

In relation to a group of people, it refers to either men or women or to boys or girls.

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their gender.

We recognise that stereotypes exist for both genders and some can lose opportunities because of these stereotypes and welcome the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with specific provision for Gender Equality and we will give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender, including domestic violence, sexual violence, bullying and exploitation.
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men in all of our functions.

Our achievements

- Half termly PPM (Pupil progress meetings) highlight any differences between gender and actions are put in place.
- All sports and extra-curricular activities are offered to both sexes.
- We use the school library service to borrow books to promote an awareness of gender issues.
- The curriculum covers gender stereotypes, changing gender roles, cultural and religious gender issues.
- E-safety awareness is promoted throughout school.
- Reasonable adjustments where possible are made to accommodate staff who request part time working hours.

Our objectives (what we plan to do)

We have identified a number of specific actions designed to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. We have committed to:

- Staff audit of curriculum opportunities to discuss gender issues and to address gender imbalance.

Gender Reassignment

What do we mean by gender reassignment?

We recognise that a person may express their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical gender that they were born with.

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment.

We understand gender reassignment does not necessarily require a medical process to be undertaken and that a person will be protected because of gender reassignment if they:

- Make their intention known to someone at the school
- Start to behave or dress according to the gender they identify with
- Undergo treatment such as surgery or hormone therapy
- Have already received gender recognition under the gender recognition act 2004

The school will also respect the confidentiality of those seeking gender reassignment and will provide a supportive environment within its school community.

Our achievements:

- Unisex toilets throughout school
- Removal of boys and girls lines at the end of break time

Our Objectives (what we plan to do):

- Explore new resources and audit consistency of provision already in place.
- Fully remove gender identified toilets and replace with unisex toilets.

Pregnancy and maternity

What do we mean by pregnancy and maternity?

Treating a woman (or a female pupil of any age) less favourably because she is or has been pregnant, has given birth in the last 26 weeks or is breastfeeding a baby who is 26 weeks or younger.

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their pregnancy or maternity.

We will also seek to make arrangements for female pupils or staff to ensure that they are not treated less favourably because they are pregnant or breastfeeding.

We will not discriminate against a pupils or staff in absences related to pregnancy and maternity.

Our achievements

- We aim to make reasonable adjustments and be flexible in accommodating the needs of our staff, children and parents.

Our objectives (what we plan to do)

- We will continue to visit our practice and enhance our practice eliminating prohibited conduct, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations for staff, parents and visitors.

Race

What do we mean by Race Equality?

The school adopts the definition of Race as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 as one of the protected characteristics which refer to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We recognise that race discrimination, harassment and victimisation may be experienced by all in a number of ways, including day-to-day interaction with fellow pupils, staff and visitors.

The School also recognises that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils and staff may experience discrimination on the basis of race, colour, nationality and ethnic origin. This discrimination can manifest itself in all areas of their lives and can have serious consequences

We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to Race Equality.

Our achievements

- We have a race incident reporting protocol
- We are extremely proud of our positive, inclusive, embracing culture
- We are active in the promotion of British Values.
- External agencies invited into school to work with children on British Values
- Our curriculum promotes ethnic diversity and celebrates difference e.g. Theatre workshops including African dance, storytelling from different countries and cultures, visits to different places of worship.
- Half termly PPM (Pupil progress meetings) highlight equality gaps in achievement rates for learners in ethnic communities.
- Regular safe guarding training addresses race related issues.
- We study other religions' significant celebratory days.

Our objectives (what we plan to do)

- To continue CPD opportunities in new and developing areas.
- To continue to promote British values.

Religion or Belief

What do we mean by Religion or Belief equality?

A Religion or belief refers to a religious and/or philosophical belief including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). A religion must be identifiable and have a clear structure or belief system. A belief need not include faith or worship of a god or gods, but must affect how a person lives their lives or perceives the world (e.g. Humanism)

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect.

Faith-based hate crime has been a new phenomenon in recent years, developing a character that is distinct from race hate crime. We recognise that discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief may be experienced in a number of ways, including day-to-day interaction with fellow pupils, staff and visitors.

We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 with regard to religion or belief and any incidents of bullying, harassment and/or victimisation on the grounds of religion and/or belief or non-belief will be taken seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal or exclusion from the school.

Our achievements

- The R.E. curriculum covers and promotes a range of religions in a positive spirit of diversity.
- Staff training undertaken to up skill knowledge and understanding in a variety of faiths and beliefs.
- Flexibility to accommodate staff and children who want to take religious holidays.
- Dietary provision is available for children of particular faiths.
- We work in partnership with schools of other faiths.

Our objectives (what we plan to do):

- Invite people of different faiths to come into school to talk about and share their religion.
- Visits by children to other faiths' places of worship.

Sexual Orientation

What do we mean by sexual orientation equality?

The school uses the definition as outlined in legislation as sexual orientation meaning a person's sexual orientation towards:

- persons of the same sex
- persons of the opposite sex, or
- persons of either sex

The school extends the definition of this protected characteristic of sexual orientation to include:

- references to a person who is of a particular sexual orientation, or
- references to persons who share the same sexual orientation

Our commitment

St Luke's RC Primary School is committed to promoting an ethos that safeguards the dignity and well-being of everyone and encourages practices that take into account the rights of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment and victimisation directed at anyone because of their sexual orientation.

The School will combat discrimination faced by lesbians, gay and bisexual (LGB) people. We want to ensure equality of opportunity for LGB people across our curriculum provision, services and employment.

We will respect the rights of individuals to be open about their sexual orientation, tackle homophobia, challenge stereotyping and improve knowledge about LGB communities, both internally and to the community as a whole.

The school recognises the need to protect pupils and staff from unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sexual orientation as required by the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation). We are committed to taking a pro-active approach to preventing all forms of homophobia within the school and will assess the impacts of our policies, functions and procedures on promoting sexual orientation equality as part of our Equality Impact Assessment processes.

We will deal with complaints of discrimination and harassment speedily and according to Local Authority Guidance and notify complainants of the outcome and actions taken.

Our achievements

- The anti-bullying policy has made explicit that homophobic bullying and harassment will not be tolerated

Our objectives (what we plan to do)

- Consult the government's sex and relations guidance to support staff.
- Review and develop PSHE curriculum – Jigsaw.
- Develop RSHE curriculum in line statutory 2020 guidance.

Community Cohesion (and promoting British values)

What do we mean by Community Cohesion?

St Luke's RC Primary School adopts the Department for Education definition of community cohesion to mean working towards a society in which:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued.
- Similar life opportunities are available to all.
- Strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

Our commitment

For a number of years, we have been committed to promoting community cohesion as part of the response to the legal duties outlined in previous legislation.

We understand that Community Cohesion is the process that should happen in all communities to ensure that different groups and individual people get on well together. It should also allow for new communities and existing communities to adapt and integrate with one another.

The school will promote community cohesion within a number of dimensions including:

- The school community
- The community within which the school is located.

Our achievements

- CPD delivered to staff on promoting British values.
- Assemblies delivered to children on specific aspects of British values.
- School council promotes respect for others, democracy and valuing others.
- Visits from the school nurse and the 'life caravan'
- Links are made with other schools in the local community.
- Money is raised for different charities e.g. Cafod, Macmillan, Toys for children, St Joseph's Penny.

Our objectives (what we plan to do):

- Develop a partnership with a school abroad.
- Anti-bullying week to be celebrated in school and children sign a pledge.

We will evidence our effectiveness for OFSTED by demonstrating:

A widely shared sense of the contribution of different communities to a shared vision:

- A strong sense of individual rights and responsibilities within the school community.
- That all children and parents feel they are being treated fairly and have the same opportunities.
- That children trust the school to act fairly.
- We have strong and positive relationships.

Safeguarding & Building Resilience – “Learning together to be safe”

St Luke's RC Primary School is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by taking all reasonable steps to protect them and build resilience in accordance with the DfE guidance – *Learning Together to be Safe and Working together to safe guard children*.

This commitment is in line with our school's current Safeguarding policy and applies to all adults, including volunteers, working in or on behalf of the school.

We recognise that some young people, who are vulnerable to extreme views, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and to view the world in a positive way. We also recognise that their behaviour may be challenging at times, and that some may cause offence or harm to others.

We will therefore always take a considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils by:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn and develop in our school setting.
- Identifying children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to extreme views / radicalisation, and taking appropriate action in accordance with the school's Safeguarding procedures with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in our school setting.
- Making appropriate referrals to the Local Authority for early intervention and support where necessary.
- Ensuring that staff member(s) or governor(s) responsible for safeguarding are kept fully aware of their responsibilities, by attending relevant training and briefings.
- Letting staff, parents and pupils know how to voice their concerns.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately in accordance with appropriate school policies and procedures.

Consultation and Information

We will consult our parents, staff, governors, visitors and children through:

- Staff meetings
- Governor meetings
- Parent workshops
- Parent's evenings
- School council meetings

We will publish this document on our school website. A hard copy and/or a range of formats will be made available upon request. We will endeavour to overcome barriers to access, any consultation e.g. language and communication, venues and times of meetings when carrying out consultation. Our focus will be on quality of opportunity in respect of the protected characteristics. We will endeavour to draw out potential differences and to consult with a range of stake holders.

Publishing and raising awareness

We recognise that our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy is a public document that should be available to any interested stakeholder.

Specific Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, we recognise that from April 2012, as a school, we also have a "specific duty" to:

1. Publish sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty every four years, with an action plan review on at least an annual basis. This can include information on the effect that our school policies and practices have on protected groups.

We will also:

- Making it available on request.
- Providing a summary in our prospectus, including our vision and key priorities.
- Discussion of staff development activities that we have undertaken or plan to undertake to raise awareness of the legal duties and the implications for staff.
- Information on ensuring contractors and other service providers are aware of our policy.

Monitoring and evaluating our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy

We will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of our Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.

We will report annually on our progress and performance.

Our annual report will be shared with Governors and our School Improvement Partner.

Both will explain how the full report can be obtained.

We will inform staff and pupils of our progress.

The findings of our annual report will be used to update the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and inform subsequent Equality and Community Cohesion Policies.

We want this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy to be a ‘whole organisational’ document that drives forward equality and achieves improved outcomes. We will therefore ensure that our policy is an integral part of our School Improvement Plan, and as such, our progress will have regular oversight by the senior leadership team and the governing body.

Information and data, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policy including information on the school population, workforce recruitment, retention and progression, special initiatives, progress at key stage levels and targets and future plans will be reported on to ensure effective monitoring.

We will formally review, evaluate and revise this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy every three years, to set new priorities and identify new actions. This process will again involve staff, pupils, parents and governors who reflect the full diversity of the school community.

The school has a procedure in place for recording, reporting and responding to racist incidents. The school will continue to comply with the Local Authority procedure for monitoring racist incidents so that the information can be analysed. This procedure is outlined fully in the *guidelines for schools in combating and recording racist incidents*.

Links with other school policies

School policies that link with, and have informed this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy include:

- SEND policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Admissions policy
- Safe guarding policy

- Attendance policy
- Behaviour policy

Roles and responsibilities

This Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved and connected with the school, so that each individual knows what is expected of them. Promoting equality and preventing discrimination, victimisation and harassment is the responsibility of the whole school staff, including support staff. All who are associated with the school have a responsibility for promoting equality and community cohesion, and avoiding unfair discriminatory practices.

The Governing body will:

- Ensure sure the school complies with all current equality legislation.
- Monitor the implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy Community Cohesion to check progress and assess impact on staff, pupils and parents.
- Ensure that all governors are aware of their legal responsibilities under equality legislation.
- Receive and discuss regular equality and community cohesion reports on progress and performance.
- Monitor achievement of equality targets.
- Check that implementation of the Policy achieves improved outcomes for equality and community cohesion and people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to the protected characteristics of disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- Support the Head teacher in implementing any actions necessary.
- Have one governor who takes on the role of designated governor responsible for equality and community cohesion monitoring the policy closely.

The Headteacher will:

- Provide proactive leadership to create a community that recognises and celebrates difference within a culture of respect and cooperation.
- Ensure staff, pupils, parents/carers and any other interested stakeholders are aware of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy, their roles and responsibilities in implementing it, and receive training and support in carrying these actions out.
- Monitor to ensure effective implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.
- Provide regular reports for governors on progress and performance.
- Allocate appropriate responsibilities, and provide suitable training and development for staff to implement this policy.
- Assess and monitor the impact of the policy.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Drive forward implementation of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.
- Support staff to carry out their role in implementing this policy.
- Provide effective leadership on equality, inclusion and community cohesion.
- Ensure the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy is successfully promoted.
- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner when dealing with any incidents or issues of discrimination, victimisation or harassment.
- Assist in implementing reviews of the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy as detailed in the School Improvement Plan.
- The SENDCo will be identified as the co-ordinator for equality and community cohesion and will be involved in action planning, policy development and monitoring and evaluation.

All Staff will:

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility in their day-to-day work to:
 - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
 - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
 - tackle bias and stereotyping
 - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, victimisation and harassment and report these
- Highlight to the senior leadership team any staff training or development that they require to carry out the above role and responsibilities.
- Promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society.
- Reviewing and monitoring curriculum policies and planning in their own subject areas to ensure that equality is promoted.

All Staff will also ensure that pupils are encouraged to:

- Recognise that they have a role and responsibility to themselves and others so that they understand and are able to:
 - promote equality, inclusion and good community relations
 - challenge inappropriate language and behaviour
 - tackle bias and stereotyping
 - work to promote anti-bullying strategies
 - respond appropriately to incidents of discrimination, victimisation and harassment and understand the action needed to report these.

Administrative, Ancillary, Supervisory and Support Staff

- All staff will familiarise themselves with this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy and know what their responsibilities are in ensuring that it is implemented.

All our Pupils are responsible for:

- Treating others kindly and fairly without prejudice, discrimination, victimisation or harassment.
- Attending and engaging in their own learning as well as helping other pupils to learn.
- Learning to treat each other's with respect and report incidents of discrimination to an adult.

All our Parents and Carers are responsible for:

- Supporting our school in its implementation of this Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.
- Following the school policy through their own behaviour.
- Ensuring their children attend and engage in the learning.
- Inform staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for:

- Knowing and following our equality policy.

Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this Single Equality & Community Cohesion Policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Head teacher and Governing Body.

If a member of the public feels that they have suffered harassment or been treated unfairly by the school because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation, they should report this without fail through the School's complaints procedure.

Complaints by staff will be dealt with under the Grievance or Dignity at Work Policies, as appropriate. Monitoring complaints is also another way of gathering information to see whether we are meeting our equality duties. We will report annually on complaints made and action taken as part of monitoring the Single Equality and Community Cohesion Policy.

Appendix 1

General Exceptions to the 2010 Act: Catholic Schools

The general exceptions to the Act as laid down for schools with a religious character or a registered religious ethos can be identified thus;

Acts of Worship

The Act contains a general exception to the religion or belief provisions which allows all schools to have acts of worship or other forms of collective religious observance. The daily act of collective worship is not covered by the religion or belief provisions, which means that schools are acting lawfully where provision of an equivalent act of worship for other faiths is not undertaken.

The character and content of collective worship in a Voluntary Aided school continues to be determined by the Governing Body and for a VA school with a religious character such will be in accordance with the school's Trust Deed or in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified for the school. For Catholic schools this means compliance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Schools are also free to celebrate religious festivals particular to their tradition and would not be discriminating against children of other faiths by, for example in a Catholic school, putting on a nativity play.

Employment

All of the current characteristics in Catholic schools are covered by the employment provisions of the Act. It provides that for schools with a religious character it will not be unlawful discrimination to do things permitted by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the 2006 Education and Inspections Act. The existing exemptions as they relate to schools with a religious character are therefore retained.

This means for Catholic schools that, in common with other Voluntary Aided schools with a religious character, they may give preference in connection with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of teachers at the school, to those whose religious beliefs or religious practice is in accordance with the tenets of their denomination, ie the Roman Catholic faith. This extends to the posts of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education which (cross reference the Bishops' memorandum on Appointment of Teachers to Catholic Schools) must be filled by baptised and practising Catholics¹. Likewise they may give similar preference to those who give or who are willing to give religious education at the school in accordance with the tenets of the Catholic Church². Preference can be given to practising Catholics in non-teaching posts where there is a genuine³.

The conduct of a teacher which is incompatible with the precepts of the Church, or which fails to uphold its tenets, may be taken into consideration in determining whether the teacher's employment should be terminated⁴. In addition, the Governing Body of a Voluntary Aided school, (like other schools with a religious character) has the power to dismiss a Religious Education teacher, without the consent of the Local Authority, on the grounds that s/he fails to give religious education efficiently and suitably⁵.

¹ Section 60, School Standards and Framework Act 1998

² Section 60, School Standards and Framework Act 1998

³ Section 37, Education and Inspections Act 2006

⁴ Section 60, School Standards and Framework Act 1998

⁵Section 58, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 For reference a genuine occupational requirement means that discrimination is permitted in cases where a person's sex, race or religion is a genuine occupational requirement for the job. For Catholic schools these are itemised here under the continued general exceptions to the Act. Examples from the sex discrimination legislation are where a job had to be held by a man and not a woman or vice versa to preserve decency or privacy, such as where the job involved visiting changing rooms while they are in use. Further exemptions relate to single sex sport.

Admissions

In Catholic Schools the Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for the school and makes decisions on admissions arrangements. It is their duty to ensure that such arrangements are compliant with the Admissions Codes and other relevant legislation. Further that:

- admissions criteria are clear, fair, objective and transparent
- arrangements are as simple as possible
- all parents' preferences are treated on an equal basis
- no discrimination is applied on the basis of race, sex (save in single sex schools), disability religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

However, in a Catholic school priority can be afforded to Baptised Catholic children where the school is oversubscribed and that action is in accordance with the school's published admissions policy. In addition, and for all schools, age is not a protected characteristic in relation to pupils so allowing schools to admit and organise pupils in age groups.

If these exceptions are not instanced in your existing Equality Policy then it would be useful to add them as an appendix to that Policy.

(iii) Delivery of the Curriculum

The content of the curriculum has never been caught by discrimination law and the Act states that it is specifically excluded. The delivery of the curriculum is however explicitly included.

The DfE guidance highlights the relationship between protection because of sexual orientation and protection of religious freedom. It states that many people's views on sexual orientation/sexual activity are grounded in religious belief. It refers to concerns of schools with a religious character that they may be prevented from teaching in line with their religious ethos. It also refers to teachers having expressed concerns that they may be subject to legal action if they do not voice positive views on same sex relationships, whether or not this view accords with their faith. The guidance also refers to concerns that such schools may teach and act in ways unacceptable to lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils and parents when same sex relationships are discussed because there are no express provisions to prevent this occurring.

The guidance makes clear that, like all schools, those with a religious character have a responsibility to the welfare of children in their care and to adhere to curriculum guidance, it goes on to say that, provided their beliefs are explained in an appropriate way in an educational context that takes into account existing guidance on the delivery of Sex and Religious Education (SRE), then schools should not be acting unlawfully.

Further that it would not be unlawful for a teacher in any school to express personal views on sexual orientation provided that it is done in an appropriate manner and context. The guidance however provides a note of caution about the influential role of a teacher and that their actions and responsibilities extend beyond the requirements of the equality legislation and that expressing personal views should not extend to allowing unlawful discrimination.

(iv) Gender Reassignment

In reality many of the protected characteristics within the 2010 Equality Act were already in place. However one that is new is the extension of the gender reassignment regulations to pupils.

