

# Equality Policy and Objectives

October 2021

## **1: Our Mission and Values**

Our Equality policy is based on the teachings of the Catholic Church: “Love one other as I have loved you”. Our Gospel values focus our attention on that commandment. At St Peter’s Catholic Voluntary Academy, we integrate the Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church into every aspect of learning, teaching and the life of our school community.

The Gospel values are explicitly taught at St Peter’s Catholic Voluntary Academy and include:

- Love
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
- Gratitude
- Hope
- Service
- Justice

## **2. OVERVIEW**

2.1 This policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. This policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (ie Race) and Gender.

2.2 The Equality Act combines the existing three duties into one new Equality Duty that covers all seven of the equality strands: age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In this school we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of the school community and its life, everyone will be treated equally. This Single Equality Policy summarises the school’s approach in ensuring equality for all.

## **3. LEGAL DUTIES**

3.1 We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unjust discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender, religion and sexual identity.

3.2 We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

3.2 We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

3.3 We recognise the need to treat people fairly in accordance with the precepts of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We understand the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not unjustly discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- age (for employees not for service provision),
- disability
- race
- sex (including issues of transgender)
- gender reassignment
- maternity and pregnancy
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to do some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish equality Information – to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions (we will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child).
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions

- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit

This school is opposed to all forms of prejudice and we recognise that children and young people who experience any form of prejudice-related unjust discrimination may fair less well in the education system. We provide both our pupils and staff with an awareness of the impact of prejudice in order to prevent any incidents. Any incidents that do occur are addressed immediately and logged on a register in accordance with our anti-bullying policy.

#### **4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above, we are guided by the following principles:

Principle 1: Every person is of equal value

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 due to a child of God. We see all people and potential learners as of equal value; regardless of their status.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Subject to the need to operate in accord with the official doctrines, practices and laws of the Catholic Church, our policies, procedures and activities must not unjustly discriminate, but are differentiated, as

appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to the status's identified in Principle 1.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards people regardless of their status as listed in Principle 1
- mutual respect, positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between all people regardless of their status as listed in Principle 1

Principle 4: We observe good practices in staff recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development; regardless of their status as listed in Principle 1 above.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between people identified in Principle 1.

Principle 6: We consult and involve widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve these identified in Principle 1.

## **5. STRATEGIES**

5.1 Monitoring, evaluation and review carried out by the SMT will ensure that procedures and practices within the school reflect the objectives of this policy.

5.2 Parents and governors will be involved and consulted about the provision being offered by the school.

5.3 Teachers will ensure that the teaching and learning takes account of this policy.

5.4 The diversity within our school and the wider community will be viewed positively by all.

5.5 Diversity will be recognised as a positive, rich resource for teaching, learning and the curriculum.

5.6 Professional development opportunities will be provided for staff to provide them with the

knowledge, skills and understanding they need to meet the requirements of this policy.

5.7 Contributions will be sought from parents and others to enrich teaching, learning and the curriculum.

5.8 The positive achievements of all pupils will be celebrated and recognised.

## **6. OUTCOMES**

6.1 This policy will play an important part in the educational development of individual pupils.

6.2 It will ensure that all pupils are treated with equal dignity and respect.

6.3 The school will make all reasonable adjustments to promote equal opportunity and equal treatment of all members of the school community.

6.4 We are committed to meeting the individual needs of each child and will take full account of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation in accordance with the requirements of The Single Equality Act 2010

## **7. THE CURRICULUM**

The school curriculum reflects the requirements to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010, and the National Curriculum programmes of study which we have chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

## **8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

We believe that promoting equality is everyone's responsibility

8.1 The Trust together with the Local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Chair of Governors will monitor progress against the Equality Objective(s).

8.2 The Headteacher at each academy is responsible for implementing the policy, for setting Equalities Objectives and publishing information; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action

in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

8.3 All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum;
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language;
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work;
- treat work colleagues with respect and in line with the principles of this policy.

8.4 All pupils are expected to:

- comply with the classroom codes appropriate to them and work with others in their classroom;
- report any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- behave appropriately at all times, in line with their academy behaviour policy.

### **Religious Observance**

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

### **St Peter's Catholic Voluntary Academy's Equality Objectives**

- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To eliminate any unjust discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To monitor and analyse pupil progress and attainment by race, gender, SEND and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.

**This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Governing Body, as part of its monitoring cycle. Next review date October 2024.**