

St. Clement's C. of E. Academy

Equality Policy

Learning for Life, Anchored in Christ

Approved by Governors:
Next review: July 2022

ST. CLEMENT'S
C.OF E. ACADEMY

Our vision :

Inspiring happy, **courageous**, independent, curious and creative, life-long learners. We aim for all to achieve their full potential, striving both academically and socially with **humility** and **dignity**.

Believing being anchored in Jesus Christ will guide us all with **hope**, **compassion** and **wisdom** in becoming successful members of a global community.

Statement of Intent:

Promoting equality means treating people fairly, valuing differences and removing the barriers that prevent people from fully participating in school life and realising their full potential. St Clement's Academy is committed to taking positive action that will ensure that difference and diversity are embraced and that all are treated with dignity and respect.

This policy is in accordance with The Equality Act 2010, which replaced all previous legislation in relation to equal opportunities and was updated in June 2015 (removing all links to expired forms). In line with that legislation, it seeks to ensure that this school provides equal opportunity for all children and adults, giving due regard to groups with 'protected characteristics', in terms of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership, in accordance with the Act.

Aims:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins
- To ensure that quality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life
- To work together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. Teaching and learning:

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- 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;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

2. Admissions and exclusions

Our admissions arrangements are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour and Exclusions Policies. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

3. Equal Opportunities for Staff

This section deals with aspects of equal opportunities relating to staff at St Clement's C of E Academy.

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.

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 and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) 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.

4. Equality and the law

There are a number of statutory duties that must be met by every school in line with legislation from the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), Disability Equality Duty (2005) and Equality Act (2010).

The action plan at the end of this Equality Plan outlines the actions St Clement's C of E Academy will take to meet the general duties detailed below.

4a. Race Equality

This section of the plan reflects the general and specific duties of schools as detailed in The Race Relations Act 1976 and as amended by The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The General Race Equality Duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.
- Use Christian and British Values as a basis for educating pupils.

4b. Disability

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and Accessibility Strategy.

Definition of disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) 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'.

The DDA 2005 has also extended the definition of disability as follows:

- People with HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer (although not all cancers) are deemed disabled before they experience the long-term and substantial adverse effect on their activities;
- Section 18 has been amended so that individuals with a mental illness no longer have to demonstrate that it is "clinically well-recognised", although the person must still demonstrate a long-term and substantial adverse impact on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Legal duties

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 placed 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 disabled people and other people;
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people;
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

4c. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality Duty 2006 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 female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.

Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

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

4d. Sexual Orientation

The Equality Act 2006 made provision for regulations to be introduced to extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion or belief to sexual orientation.

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 came into force on 30 April 2007, and they make discrimination unlawful in the area of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation. For schools this means admissions, benefits and services for pupils and treatment of pupils.

4e. Community cohesion

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted a new section 21(5) to the Education Act 2002, introducing a duty on the governing bodies of state schools to promote community cohesion. Community cohesion encompasses promoting good relations between pupils from different races, faiths / beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds. The duty came into force on 1 September 2007.

5. Consultation and involvement

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our school community. We've involved and listened to what they have to say, including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Feedback from parent questionnaire, parents' evening
- Input from staff surveys or through staff meetings/INSET
- Feedback from the school council, PSHE lessons, whole school surveys on children's attitudes to self and school
- Issues raised in annual reviews or reviews of progress on Individual Education Plans/Personalised Provision Maps, mentoring and support

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

The purpose of this Policy is to set out how our practice and policies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relations between groups.

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

- Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality.
- Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other
Social cohesion within our school and within our local community
- Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world. Excellence is to be found everywhere
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities

- Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society

6. Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all. They are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for the next phase of education
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school or Theatre in Education (TIE).
- school sports
- employees' and staff welfare
- Pastoral Support – Wellbeing, Family Support, Attendance Management, Safeguarding and individual and group mentoring/support

7. The roles and responsibilities within our school community

7a. The role of governors

- The governing body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs on race, gender and disability

- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender, disability or any other protected characteristic
- The governors 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 socio-economic background, race, gender or disability
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability

7b. The role of the head teacher

- It is the head teacher's role to implement the school's Equality Plan and s/he is supported by the governing body in doing so
- It is the head teacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Plan, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations
- The head teacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this plan, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities
- The head teacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life
- The head teacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.
- Ensure that the Senior Leadership team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it

7c. The role of the senior leadership team

- Have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this policy
- Provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the policy
- With the Head Teacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- Assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the School Development Plan

7d. The role of all staff: teaching and non-teaching

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's Equality Plan
- All staff 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 Head Teacher
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

7e. Our parents/carers will :

- be given accessible opportunities to become involved in the review of the policy
- have access to the policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- be encouraged to actively support the policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the policy
- be informed of any incident related to this policy which could directly affect their child

8. 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 / Head Teacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Head Teacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body, MAT and local authority on a termly basis.

What is a discriminatory incident?

Harassment on grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or other factors such as socio-economic status, can take many forms including verbal or physical abuse, name calling, exclusion from groups and games, unwanted looks or comments, jokes and graffiti.

A racist incident is defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) as:

‘Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person’.

Types of discriminatory incident

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, 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 should be clear to pupils and staff how they report incidents. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should view dealing with incidents as vital to the well-being of the whole school.

9. Publishing the plan

In order to meet the statutory requirements to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme, we will:

- Publish our plan on the school website
- Raise awareness of the plan through the school newsletter, assemblies, staff meetings and other communications
- Make sure hard copies are available on request
- Make available a translated version in the main languages spoken by the community on request if possible

10. Covid 19 (Coronavirus)

At the academy we will ensure the decisions we make in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) do not directly or indirectly discriminate against employees, pupils, visitors or wider community with protected characteristics.

When making following guidance and implementing change we will ensure staff and parent situations aren't made worse by discriminatory decisions regarding furlough, sick pay or redundancy, as we know the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having a particular impact on people with certain protected characteristics.

We will;

1. Ensure the decisions we make, for example who gets extra hours or who is made redundant, are not based on protected characteristics, for example their age, sex, a disability or because they are pregnant.
2. Involve employees in decision making processes in a way that takes into account their protected characteristics, such as communicating to employees on maternity leave or communicating in accessible ways to disabled employees.
3. Set up working options in a way that does not disadvantage workers with different protected characteristics, such as those in particular age groups, disabled employees, women or pregnant workers. Make sure people selected for home working, reduced hours or furlough are chosen based on business requirements or government guidance and not on a particular protected characteristic.
4. Follow guidance from the government to protect pupils, visitors, staff, parents and the wider community.

Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of St Clement's C of E Academy School on

11th June 2020 (date)

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

Review Date: This policy will be published annually and reviewed every four years.