

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School



## Equality and Diversity Policy

POLICY: Equality and Diversity Policy

APPROVED BY: Headteacher

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REVIEW DATE: February 2026

This policy is statutory and reviewed every 4 years (gov guidance)

## **1. Introduction**

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It also provides some changes which schools need to be aware of. It provides a single, consolidated source of discrimination law, covering all the types of discrimination that are unlawful. It simplifies the law by removing anomalies and inconsistencies that had developed over time in the existing legislation, and it extends the protection from discrimination in certain areas. Schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Protection is now extended to pupils who are pregnant or undergoing gender reassignment.

There are some changes that will have an impact on schools as follows:

- Introduction of a new single equality duty to replace the previous three separate duties. This includes specific duties which are less bureaucratic and more light-touch than previous duties, requiring schools to publish equality information and objectives.
- It is now unlawful for employers to ask health-related questions of applicants before job offer, unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work. This means that schools should no longer, as a matter of course, require job applicants to complete a generic health questionnaire as part of the application procedure. Schools are advised to review their existing practices to ensure they are complying with both the Health Standards Regulations and Section 60 of the Equality Act.
- It is unlawful to discriminate against a transgender pupil.
- It is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil who is pregnant or has recently had a baby.

New Positive Action provisions will allow schools to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experienced by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics.

Such measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. Extending the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled pupils. Following the recent consultation on implementation and approach, this duty was introduced in September 2012.

## **2. Aims and Values**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School is a welcoming school where everyone is valued highly and where tolerance, honesty, co-operation and mutual respect for others are fostered. We are committed to the development of the whole person within a supportive, secure and creative environment. A broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum provides equal opportunity for all students to maximise their potential regardless of age, sex, race, colour, religion or disability.

We endeavour to promote positive relationships with parents, governors and members of the wider community. At St Mary's Church of England Primary School we aim to promote equality and tackle any form of discrimination and actively promote harmonious relations in all areas of school life. We seek to remove any barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement. We take seriously our contribution towards community cohesion.

We aim to:

- provide a secure environment in which all our pupils can flourish and achieve outcomes of being healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and enjoy economic well-being;
- provide a learning environment where all individuals see themselves reflected and feel a sense of belonging;
- prepare pupils for life in our diverse society in which children are able to see their place in the local, regional, national and international community;
- include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity;
- provide positive non-stereotyping information about different groups of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age;
- plan systematically to improve our understanding and promotion of diversity; actively challenge discrimination and disadvantage;
- make inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

To achieve these aims we will:

- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact assessment of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures;
- publish and share our policies and impact assessments with the whole community;
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage;
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to students' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning;
- ensure that the wider school curriculum makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate diversity;
- have high expectations of behaviour which demonstrates respect to others.

### **3. Equality Objectives**

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equal opportunity in line with the Equality Act October 2010. We seek to demonstrate this through all aspects of school life and in particular through our commitment to every child fulfilling their potential. This commitment applies to our work in the classroom, our pupil support systems, our recruitment and retention of staff and our work in the local and wider community.

- To ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, age or any other recognised area of discrimination
- To ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, to quality teaching, an engaging curriculum and a broad range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities
- To model teaching and learning behaviours that avoid labelling
- To reduce the gap between children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and their peer's attainment in reading, writing and maths
- To narrow any gap between children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and their peer's attainment in reading, writing and maths
- To tackle and eradicate prejudice related bullying and promote understanding in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010

- To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through all appropriate curricular opportunities
- To reduce prejudice and increase understanding of diversity and equality through direct teaching
- To promote cultural development and understanding through a rich range of experiences, both within and beyond school

#### **4. Leadership, Management and Governance**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School is committed to:

- being proactive in promoting good relationships and equality of opportunity across all aspects of school life and the wider community;
- encouraging, supporting and enabling all pupils and staff to reach their potential and make a positive contribution;
- working in partnership with families, the local authority (LA) and the wider community to establish, promote and disseminate inclusive practice and tackle discrimination ensuring that our Equality and Diversity Policy is followed.

#### **5. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body's responsibility is to

- ensure that the school complies with equality legislation;
- meet requirements to publish equality schemes;
- ensure that the school's policy and its procedures and strategies are carried out and monitored with appropriate impact assessments informing future plans;
- scrutinise the recording and reporting procedures at least annually;
- follow the LA's admissions policy, which is fair and equitable in its treatment of all groups;
- monitor attendance and take appropriate action where necessary;
- have equal opportunities in staff recruitment and professional development and membership of the Governing Body;
- provide information in appropriate, accessible formats;
- be involved in dealing with serious breaches of the policy;
- be pro-active in recruiting high-quality applicants from under-represented groups.

The Headteacher responsibility is to:

- implement the policy and its strategies and procedures;
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate and relevant continuous professional development;
- actively challenge and take appropriate action in any cases of discriminatory practice;
- deal with any reported incidents of harassment or bullying in line with LA guidance;
- ensure that all visitors and contractors are aware of, and comply with, the school's equality and diversity policy;
- produce a report on progress for governors annually.

All Staff has the responsibility to:

- be vigilant in all areas of the school for any type of harassment and bullying;
- deal effectively with all incidents from overt name-calling to the subtler forms of victimisation caused by perceived differences;

- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping within the curriculum and in the school's culture;
- promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, religion, age and sexual orientation;
- promote an inclusive curriculum and whole school ethos which reflects our diverse society;
- keep up to date with equality legislation, development and issues by attending relevant training and accessing information from appropriate sources.

## **6. Community Cohesion**

We are committed to supporting community cohesion by:

- developing a common vision and sense of belonging
- developing an appreciation of the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances
- creating opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential
- building strong and positive relationships

Engagement and extended services:

- We have good links with other schools, locally and regionally
- Teachers have links with other schools and promote good role models when interacting with staff from other schools, through a range of activities
- Learners have a strong voice and opportunities to take responsibility through our pupils School Council
- We engage parents through a range of activities, consultation evenings and focus groups
- We have strong links with external agencies including social services, the EWO service, the health service and police.
- Multi- agency working with voluntary agencies and private sector. Building networks and partnerships between services to encourage joint thinking and sharing of skills.
- Outreach work via family support team including preventative work and crisis intervention, satellite groups, home visits and needs-led support.
- Integrated support to ensure a personalised service.
- Relevant signposting to other agencies in the community.
- Raising awareness in the community about the range of services on offer at the centre and locally.

## **7. Breaches of the Policy**

All breaches of the policy will be rigorously followed up using the appropriate procedures and reported to the Governing Body and LA as required.