



St. Gilbert's Church of England Primary School

Single Equalities Policy

Scope

At St Gilbert's Church of England Primary School we are committed to fostering good relations between all members of the school and the wider community. This includes the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding and community cohesion.

Aims

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.

Through the enactment of this policy St. Gilbert's Church of England Primary School will fulfill its duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity, and where appropriate, age. The guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff, governors, contractors, visitors etc.

Headteacher: Frances Dicker Signed:

Chair of Governors: Revd. G Cooper Signed:

Review Date: September 2017

Next Review: September 2018

Equality & Equal Opportunities Statement

Our school is committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to contribute to the life of the school free from intimidation and harassment and to achieve their full potential.

All children have equal access and inclusive rights to the curriculum regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability. We ensure that work is differentiated for the performance of all groups and individuals.

All staff have equal access and inclusive rights to their work regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability or ability.

Through this policy we aim to ensure that:

At St Gilbert's C of E Primary School:

1. We see all learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status;
- Whatever their gender and gender identity;
- Whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background; and
- Whatever their sexual identity.

2. We recognise and respect difference:

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barriers and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made;
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised;
- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised;
- Religion, belief or faith background; and
- Sexual identity.

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 disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people;
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents;
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment; and
- Community cohesion within both the school and wider community.

4. We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- Whether or not they are disabled;
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status; and
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity, and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

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

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people;
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds; and
- Girls and boys, women and men.

6. We consult and involve widely

At our school we engage with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We consult and involve:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- People from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- Both women and men, and girls and boys; and
- People of all sexualities.

7. We believe society as a whole should benefit

At our school we intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled;
- People of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds;
- Both women and men, girls and boys; and
- Homosexual people as well as heterosexual.

8. We base our practices on sound evidence

We maintain and publish quantitative and qualitative information about our progress towards greater equality in relation to:

- Disability;
- Ethnicity, religion and culture – Race equality;
- Gender awareness; and

- Unlawful Behaviours (see appendix for definitions).

The Curriculum

We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the aims of this policy.

The content of the school curriculum has never been covered by discrimination law, and the Equality Act now states explicitly that it is excluded. However, our School will continue to include a full range of issues, ideas and materials in our curriculum, and to expose pupils to thoughts and ideas of all kinds, however challenging or controversial, without fear of legal challenge based on a protected characteristic (see appendix for definition).

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.

Disability

The law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the Equality Act in a number of ways. In particular, it works in only one direction, as it protects disabled people but not people who are not disabled. This means that our school may treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so, by making reasonable adjustments to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities. It is never unlawful to treat disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people..

The definition of what constitutes discrimination is more complex. The category of 'discrimination arising from disability' protects pupils who are carers, e.g. if a pupil is disciplined for a reason (such as absence) arising from their caring responsibilities for a disabled parent /sibling, this may constitute unlawful discrimination.

Role of the Headteacher and Board of Governors

- The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.
- The Governing Body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
- The Headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; 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.
- Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Role of all Staff

All staff are expected to:

- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom;
- Deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur;
- Plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the aim of this policy;
- Support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language; and
- Keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Accessibility of policy documents

Parents and carers are welcome to ask for further information about any policy matter. Copies of all current school policies are available for parents and carers to read.

Appendix

Definition of Protected Character

There are nine equality strands, known as Protected Characteristics:

- Disability;
- Ethnicity (including Gypsy and Traveller groups);
- Gender;
- Gender identity and transgender;
- Faith, religion and belief;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Age.

Each relates to direct discrimination, discrimination by association, discrimination by perception, indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Definition of unlawful behavior

The Act defines four types of unlawful behaviour: direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

Direct discrimination - occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic – for example if a pupil was refused to be a prefect because she is a girl. It is also unlawful to discriminate because of race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

Indirect Discrimination - occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage. An example might be holding a celebration event during Ramadan, which could make it difficult for observant Muslim pupils and parents to participate.

Harassment - covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic. It applies only to harassment because of disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity, and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It is very important to recognise that this does not mean that we are free to bully or harass pupils on these other grounds.

Victimisation - occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of something they have done (“a protected act”) in connection with the Act. A protected act might involve, for example, making an allegation of discrimination or bringing a case under the Act, or supporting another person’s complaint by giving evidence or information. Even if what a person did or said was incorrect or misconceived, they are protected against retaliation unless they were acting in bad faith. The reason for this is to ensure that people are not afraid to raise genuine concerns about discrimination because of fear of retaliation. If a pupil has himself or herself done a protected act, such as making a complaint of discrimination against a teacher, then the child’s own good faith will be relevant. For example, if the parent’s complaint is based on information from her son and the son was deliberately lying, it is not victimisation for the school to punish him in the same way as it might do any other dishonest pupil.

Equality Objectives 2017-2018

In Key Stage 1 and 2:

- To continue to diminish the difference between our disadvantaged children and other pupils in Reading, Phonics, Writing and Maths