

# Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



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| <b>Policy Holder</b>  | Cat Le Fleming |
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At Sacred Heart School we work hard to foster equality and equal opportunity for all, in line with the teachings of the Church, where the intrinsic dignity of all people is recognised. As outlined by the Catholic Education Service, 'any behaviour which undermines someone's dignity is completely unacceptable and must be challenged in the context of a Christian community, which seeks to model God's love and the values of His Kingdom'.

We work to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between all those within our school community. We do this with regard to the nine protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

**A glossary which defines these terms and additional terms related to equality, diversity and inclusion can be found in Appendix 1.**

Our duties under the Equality Act also reflect international human rights standards as expressed in 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.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires us to promote community cohesion and at Sacred Heart School we work towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of

people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist.

This policy also follows the best practice guidance as set out by the Catholic Education Service in 'The Equality Act 2010 - Guidance for Catholic Schools'.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected in our school policies and procedures, especially those related to (but not limited to):

- Accessibility
- Behaviour
- Uniform
- Recruitment
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Special Educational Needs

At Sacred Heart our School Mission Statement sets out our core values and beliefs. Our Mission Statement is: 'To go forward together in Christ. To respect our Neighbour. To always give of our best.'

The school has five Keys. These Keys summarise important skills we want our pupils to have and make up the 5 part of our 3-5-7 approach. The Five keys are

- Hunger to Achieve
- Curiosity and Wonder
- Community Unity
- The Power of Me
- Being Safe and Responsible

Each key has a list of five statements which help the children focus on improvements they can make towards all aspects of their development.

## **Our school profile**

The school is oversubscribed and our pupils are from a diverse range of backgrounds. The community is relatively stable and as a result levels of pupil mobility are low. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' social and emotional wellbeing evident in the close work with partnership agencies and organisations. Some key statistics are:

- number of students on roll= 431 (230 boys and 201 girls)
- 34 pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan
- 24% of pupils have special needs.
- 46% of pupils do not have English as their first language.
- ethnic groups which are represented at the school are: Black – Nigerian, Other Black, Black and Any Other Ethnic Group, Other Mixed Background, White Other, Latin / South / Central American, White – English, Other Ethnic Group, Black Caribbean, Portuguese, Turkish, White and Any Other Ethnic Group, White European, White – Irish, Asian and Any Other Ethnic Group, Greek, White and Black Caribbean, White Western European, White and Black African, Arab Other, White and Any Other Asian Background, White Eastern European, Other White British, Filipino, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Any Other Ethnic Group, Italian, Traveller of Irish Heritage, Kurdish, Indian, Greek Cypriot
- religious groups which are represented
- 44% of students receive free school meals

## **Fulfilling our public sector equality duty**

How we eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation:

Sacred Heart School does not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation of anyone within our school community, and we are opposed to all forms of prejudice.

The school has robust procedures for dealing with prejudice-related incidents and all staff receive training on these. All incidents are recorded, and this data is shared with the governing body and analysed so that any trends can be identified, and action plans put in place. Further information on these procedures can be found in the Behaviour and Safeguarding policies.

The Whistleblowing policy outlines the procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation experienced by staff

The Complaints Policy outlines the procedures for reporting and responding to incidents of discrimination, harassment and victimisation experienced by parents and carers and the wider school community.

**How we advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it:**

Treating people equally does not mean treating them all the same. We recognise that people have different needs, different experiences, and different outlooks and face different barriers to achieving positive outcomes.

We collect and monitor data broken down by different protected characteristics in order to identify inequalities and disparities within our student population in terms of:

- Progress and attainment
- Admissions
- Attendance
- Rewards, sanctions and exclusions

And within our staff population in terms of:

- Recruitment, retention, training and promotion
- Capability, disciplinary and complaints

We employ appropriate interventions where necessary in order to address disparities. Please see our Equalities Objectives and Action Plan for further details.

We consult widely with a range of groups and individuals to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones.

We assess all of our policies and procedures to ensure that no individuals or groups are disadvantaged and to identify opportunities for positive action.

We make reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment and its activities are as accessible and as welcoming as possible to all, in some cases treating disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people where necessary. Please see our Accessibility Plan for further information.

We ensure that students' work is differentiated appropriately, and that the curriculum is accessible to all students.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of staff and students and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We take all reasonable steps to ensure the wellbeing and inclusion of transgender staff and students, including those who transition during their time at the school.

**How we foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it:**

We ensure that our curriculum offers opportunities to learn about people with a diverse range of identities.

We teach our students to recognise and challenge stereotypes and prejudice and to value difference.

We ensure that our resources challenge stereotypes and reflect the diversity of society.

We take positive action to ensure that people with a range of different identities engage with our school community for example guest speakers, arts groups, school governors, parent/carer helpers etc.

Our behaviour policy includes a requirement to respect other people and their different identities.

We take steps to ensure diversity in our student council, governing body and staff team.

We celebrate diversity at every opportunity and hold regular assemblies and events celebrating diversity throughout the year.

**Note: Exemptions for schools with a religious character**

The Equality Act 2010 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 will not be acting unlawfully if they do not provide an equivalent act of worship for faiths other than the Catholic faith. However, recognising the importance of various faiths to all within our school community is an important way to improve inclusivity and ensure that all stakeholders feel welcome and valued.

In regard to admissions, priority may be given on the basis of faith criteria in cases of where the school is oversubscribed, in accordance with admissions law and the provisions of the School Admissions Code. To determine how pupils should demonstrate faith, the school consults with the diocese. Further information on this can be found in our Admissions Policy.

Exemptions also apply in regard to employment. For Catholic schools (voluntary-aided), preference may be given in connection with the appointment or promotion of staff, to those whose religious beliefs or religious practice is in accordance with the tenets of the school's religion or who are willing to give religious education in accordance with the tenets of the faith. This said, the school fully recognises the contribution of teachers of other Christian Churches, other faiths and other belief systems. In addition, religious criteria may not be applied to any other posts in a VA school unless there is a genuine occupational requirement.

## **Responsibilities**

### **The governing body is responsible for ensuring that:**

The school complies with all equalities legislation relevant to the school community, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

A member of the governing body has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.

The school and governors carry out equalities impact assessments on all other policies.

All available data is used to consider equalities issues and to ensure adjustments to school policies and practices are made, including positive action where necessary.

### **The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for:**

Overseeing the implementation of the Equality Policy.

Ensuring that all who enter the school are aware of, and comply with, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given relevant training and support.

Taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.

Regularly reviewing data related to prejudice-related incidents and taking necessary steps to reduce occurrences of incidents within the school.

### **All staff are responsible for:**

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying. Whilst staff are permitted to express their personal views on a topic, the law requires that views should never be expressed in a way that could constitute harassment or discrimination.

- Understanding and complying with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Contributing to the action plan attached to the policy.
- Making reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students do not experience discrimination or exclusion.
- Dealing with prejudice-related incidents, following the specific procedure.
- Attending training sessions as necessary to carry out this policy and keep up to date with equalities legislation.
- Challenging bias and stereotyping.
- Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos.

**All parents/carers are responsible for:**

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Understanding the ethos of the school and complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Ensuring that they and the young people that they are responsible for meet the expectations set out in the home-school agreement.

**All visitors are responsible for:**

Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying in their engagement with the school.  
Complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

**All students are responsible for:**

- Refraining from engaging in behaviour that constitutes discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Understanding the ethos of the school and complying with the school's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

- Reporting prejudice-related incidents.
- Understanding, valuing and celebrating diversity.
- Challenging stereotypes and prejudices.

## **Equality Objectives and Action Plan**

In order to fulfil its Public Sector Equality Duty the school collects equality information on pupils and staff.

Using this information, the school analyses the following in terms of protected characteristics:

Student admissions

Student attendance

Student performance/achievement

Student sanctions

Student rewards

Staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Staff disciplinary and capability proceedings

Records of prejudice-related incidents

Complaints by parents and carers

The school also conducts surveys with staff, pupils and parents and carers to identify areas that they feel the school is doing well and areas for improvement.

This information is used to identify any discrepancies between people from different groups and to identify equality objectives.

The school identifies any equality training needs within our staff. These needs will be addressed, and this may also inform our Equality Objectives.

Our equality objectives may also take into account national and local priorities and issues as appropriate. They are devised in consultation with school governors and are integrated into the school improvement plan. We keep the objectives under review and report annually on our progress towards achieving them.

### **Equality Impact Assessments**

All school policies are regularly assessed for their impact on different groups of people with shared protected characteristics. This ensures that our policies, practices and decision-making processes are fair and do not discriminate against any particular groups. It also enables us to consider ways to proactively advance equality.

### **Breaches of this policy**

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

## Appendix 1: Glossary

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| <b>Antisemitism</b>   | A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.   |
| <b>Biphobia</b>       | Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about bisexual people.  |
| <b>Cisgender</b>      | Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.   |
| <b>Disability</b>     | A physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out typical day-to-day activities.  |
| <b>Discrimination</b> | <p>This can be direct: When someone is treated less favourably than another person or other people because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• they have a particular protected characteristic</li><li>• someone thinks they have that protected characteristic (discrimination by perception)</li></ul> |

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|                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are connected to someone with that protected characteristic (discrimination by association)</li> </ul> <p>Or indirect: There is a policy that applies in the same way for everybody but disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic.</p> |
| <b>Gender identity</b>            | Someone's internal sense of their own gender, whether man, woman or some other gender. This may or may not align with their assigned sex.   |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b>        | If someone is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) to change sex and/or gender. This might involve medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender.                       |
| <b>Harassment</b>                 | Unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which violates a person's dignity and/or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.   |
| <b>Homophobia</b>                 | Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about lesbian, or gay people.   |
| <b>Islamophobia</b>               | A type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.<br>Further information <a href="#">here</a> .  |
| <b>Prejudice-related incident</b> | Any incident which is perceived to be prejudice-related by the victim or any other person.  |
| <b>Race and ethnicity</b>         | Includes skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.   |

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| <b>Racism</b>                 | Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about someone based on their skin colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin.   |
| <b>Reasonable adjustments</b> | <p>Taking reasonable steps to remove disadvantages faced by disabled people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing provisions, criteria or practices</li> <li>• changing or removing a physical feature or providing a reasonable alternative way to avoid that feature</li> <li>• providing auxiliary aids</li> </ul> |
| <b>Religion or belief</b>     | <p>Religion is a formalised system of belief that aims to relate humanity to spirituality. Beliefs included are philosophical beliefs, which are considered to be similar to a religion.</p> <p>We include people who have no religion or a lack of belief.</p>   |
| <b>Sex</b>                    | Whether someone is male, female or intersex.  |
| <b>Sexism</b>                 | Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about someone based on their sex.   |
| <b>Sexual orientation</b>     | Who someone is emotionally, mentally, and physically attracted to in relation to their sex/gender, this includes heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual and asexual.   |
| <b>Transgender</b>            | An umbrella term to describe people whose gender identity differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.   |
| <b>Transphobia</b>            | Prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views about transgender people including refusal to accept their gender identity.   |

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| <b>Victimisation</b> | Treating someone badly because they are:<br>making a claim or complaint of discrimination<br>helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information<br>Or because they intend to do so. |
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