



Equal Opportunity Policy

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Policy History	Date
First draft	November 2007
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Review	February 2010
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This policy is reviewed every three years

Rationale

St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School values the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. Within this ethos of achievement, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. This policy helps to ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all our children, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We aim to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society and ensure that the education we offer fosters positive attitudes to all people. We endeavour to tackle prejudice and promote understanding as part of our general duty to promote equality - to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. Our vision for our pupils is that within an inclusive safe and stimulating environment we inspire them to become creative, confident individuals who achieve their full potential. We support them to develop into independent lifelong learners who are respectful, valued members of the community. Our vision is to further develop positive respectful links with parents and carers by providing a welcoming and accessible school which aims to collaborate with families so that together we can support parents/carers and their children in their education and wellbeing.

Legal

Our school is committed to meeting its duties as detailed below. We understand that the duties apply to the employment of staff and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

Our General Duty under the Equality Act 2010:

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



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- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects pupils from discrimination and harassment based on protected characteristics. The protected characteristics for school provisions are:

- age (for staff only)
- disability
- ethnicity and race
- gender (sex)
- gender identity and reassignment
- pregnancy, maternity and breast feeding
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (for staff only)
- Disability

The disability provisions in this Act are different from those for other protected characteristics in a number of ways, including a more complex definition of what constitutes discrimination.

Schools may, and often must, treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils by making reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled pupil can benefit from what they offer to the same extent that a pupil without a disability can.

Disability non-discrimination

- Some children in our school may have disabilities. We are committed to meeting the needs of these children, as we are to meeting the needs of all within the school. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that these children are not disadvantaged compared with non-disabled children.
- The school is committed to providing an environment that allows disabled children and adults as much access to the school premises as possible and to all areas of learning.
- Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities.
- For example, they may give additional time to complete certain activities, ensure access, modify teaching materials, or offer alternative activities if children are unable to manipulate tools or equipment.

At St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:



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- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment of schools to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

Provision for disabled pupils is closely linked with the existing provisions for pupils with special educational needs. These are the same duties as previously existed under the DDA and have been replicated in the Equality Act 2010.

Racial equality

We acknowledge that this policy and its implementation are statutory requirements. Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRRA) it is unlawful to discriminate either directly or indirectly on racial grounds. It has been developed in line with the findings of Ofsted's report "Racial Equality in Education" (2005).

In our school we will:

- strive to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity, regardless of race, ethnicity or religion;
- promote good relations between people of different racial and ethnic groups;
- seek to educate pupils in a manner which promotes community cohesion in a multi-cultural society.

We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour. Should a racist incident occur, we will deal with it in accordance with school procedures (see policies for Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy).

We endeavour to make our school and its environment welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in the displays of work shown around the school. Our curriculum reflects the attitudes, values and respect that we have for minority ethnic groups. So, for example, in the curriculum topic on religious festivals, the children learn the importance of Diwali to Hindus and Sikhs.

Gender equality

We recognise that nationally, there is an unacceptable discrepancy in the achievement of boys and girls. We are committed to seeing all individuals and groups of pupils making the best progress possible in our school. We analyse end of term data to identify any gender discrepancies and put actions in place to address the balance.

We address gender imbalance through:

- removing gender bias from our resources and ensuring, for example, fiction books capture boys' interest;



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- employing a variety of activities, and include a kinaesthetic element;
- making sure that our school environment promotes positive gender role models, in relation to learning and achievement;
- minimising gender stereotyping;

We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, it affects different sub-groups of boys and girls in different ways. Social class, ethnic origin and local context are all strongly linked to the relative achievement of boys and girls. We also seek to ensure that policies designed to improve the attainment of one gender group does not do so at the expense of the other.

Religious/Belief Equality

St Cuthbert's Junior School respects the Christian belief that every human being is made in God's image and each person's true worth and value stems from this understanding. This commitment not only reflects our Christian basis as a Church School in line with our Trust Deed but also prepares children for life in a richly diverse and multi-ethnic society. This policy should be regarded as a living document and interpreted as part of the School's vision, aims and values as a Church School whilst respecting the differing beliefs of others.

St Cuthbert's Junior School policy is to consider all children whatever their faith or background and are committed to treating all children, staff and others who come into contact with the school on an equal basis whilst accepting its basis as a Christian Church School in line with the Trust Deed. The school respects the views of other faiths and promotes the goal of community cohesion.

See also St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School Collective Worship Policy which sets out how the general aims of the School will be practically realised by staff and governors around the school and in the classroom with reference to collective worship.

Responsibilities

All governors, staff, volunteers, pupils and their families need to develop an appropriate understanding of, and act in accordance with, the school's Equality Policy.

Responsibilities Governing Body

- Ensure that the school complies with equality-related legislation.
 - Ensure that the policy and its procedures are implemented by the Headteacher.
 - Ensure all other school policies promote equality.
 - Give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions.
- Headteacher



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- Implement the policy and its related procedures.
- Make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy.
- Take appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination.
- Ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff.
- Ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents.

Responsibilities of staff

- Enact this policy, its commitments and procedures, and their responsibilities associated with this policy.
- Deal with bullying and discriminatory incidents, and know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping.
- Promote equality and good relations and not discriminate on any grounds.
- Attend such training and information opportunities as necessary to enact this policy and keep up to date with equality legislation.
- To be models of equal opportunities through their words and actions.

Responsibilities of Pupils

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.
Visitors (e.g. parent helpers, contractors)
- To be aware of, and comply with, the school's equality policy.
- To refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour (for example, racist language) on school premises.