

St Margaret's CE Primary School

Equality Policy

Introduction

St Margaret's is committed to the advantage of equality of opportunities for all members of the school community. The governing body aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, parent or pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably than anyone else.

This policy is concerned with all pupils' access to the curriculum and the recruitment and opportunity of all staff.

The Equality Act 2010, the bulk of which took effect from 1st October 2012, replaces and consolidates previous anti-discrimination legislation, including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976, with a single Act. The 2010 Act introduces changes that the school needs to take account of.

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), sometimes referred to as the general duty that applies to schools and all public bodies. The combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011. In common with all public bodies, St Margaret's CE Primary School will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Foster good relations across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In practise, due regard means that the governing body and the leadership team will:

- Be aware of the duty to have due regard when making decisions or taking action and will assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics
- Consider equality implications before and at the time that they develop policy and take decisions, not as an afterthought and they will keep them under review on a continuing basis
- Integrate PSED into the implementation of all the schools functions and ensure that the analysis necessary to comply with the duty is carried out seriously, rigorously and with an open mind. It will never be a question of ticking boxes or just following a particular process

It is unlawful to discriminate in the following areas, termed protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Aims and objectives

- To comply with the legislation of the Equality Act 2012
- To continue to maintain the school's position as a provider of the highest quality education and, as a good employer, providing development opportunities for all staff
- To ensure that equality remains high on the school's strategic agenda
- To establish good management practice and to set out a proactive agenda in which discrimination is recognised as an organisational issue which needs an organisational response
- To ensure that all staff work together with a shared sense of purpose to meet the needs of every pupil
- To ensure that pupils and staff contribute towards a happy and caring environment by showing respect for and appreciation of, one another as individuals
- To ensure that complaints or evidence of failure to comply with the school's equality policy will be dealt with promptly and fully investigated according to the relevant procedure

As a VA school, St Margaret's has certain exceptions to the general code as applied to most schools in England and Wales. These are:

- The admissions Policy permits the school to give priority to families with church connection within bands of admission

We may apply religious criteria when recruiting any member of the teaching staff. In recruitment and subsequent promotion we seek to appoint the person most suitable for the post, we may give preference to persons:

- Who is a practising Christian

Curriculum

We seek to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in which the basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught progressively and systematically. Furthermore, the school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of gender, ability or ethnic origin.

The curriculum avoids stereotypes and provides good role models for all pupils. The content for the curriculum has never been within discrimination law and the new Act explicitly excludes it. However, the delivery of the curriculum is explicitly included. Therefore we seek to ensure that the curriculum is not delivered in a discriminatory way. For example:

- Children from all ethnic backgrounds are called upon to express their views in class discussions
- Girls and boys have equal access to all areas of the curriculum including sport

When curriculum policies are reviewed due regard is given to equal opportunity implications.

Tracking pupil progress

We aim to ensure that all barriers to learning are removed for all our pupils, especially those with protected characteristics. To achieve this we:

- Track the progress of pupils by analysing data by race, gender, disability and disadvantage
- Track the progress of all our pupils by analysing data
- Carry out regular assessments of all our pupils
- Set personal targets for English and mathematics

Special issues for some protected characteristics

Gender reassignment

It is rare for very young pupils to want to undergo gender reassignment. However, the governors will ensure that gender variant pupils, or the children of transgender parents are not singled out for different or less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

Race

The governors will make sure that pupils of all races are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils. An annual audit is carried out to monitor the learning experience of these pupils.

Sexual orientation

The governors will make sure that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents are not singled out for unfair treatment.

Disability

The governors will make all reasonable adjustments to avoid disadvantage to a disabled pupil. When considering what a reasonable adjustment is, the governors will take into account the circumstances of each case. Factors which the governors will consider include: The financial or other resources required for the adjustment, its effectiveness, its effect on other pupils,

health and safety requirements and whether aids have been made available through the Special Educational Needs route.

Positive Action

Under the Act, the school can now lawfully make New Positive Action provisions to allow us to target measures that are designed to alleviate disadvantages experience by, or to meet the particular needs of, pupils with particular protected characteristics. These measures will need to be a proportionate way of achieving the relevant aim. The school will use these provisions as appropriately as possible.

General Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Governors

- The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equal opportunities in this policy and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, religion, 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, religion, gender, disability or any of the other protected characteristics
- 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 pupils, parents and carers
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, religion, gender or disability
- The Governing Body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, religion, gender or disability
- The Governing Body will apply these principles equally in their dealings with staff and any other persons to whom the school provides services as part of its public function, and will equally apply these principles with regard to the characteristics of age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and sexual orientation to the extent that these characteristics are applicable to pupils, parents, staff or other persons to whom the school provides services as part of its public function

The role of the Headteacher

- It is the Headteacher's role to implement the school's Equality Policy and the Headteacher is supported by the Governing Body in doing so
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Policy, and to ensure that these guidelines are applied fairly in all situations
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to this policy, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities

- The Headteacher 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 Headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of harassment and victimisation, bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness

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 Policy
- All staff will where possible monitor all school publications for the use of bias and positively address this issue when purchasing books and other resources
- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice in relation to the protected characteristics and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

Tackling Discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation and related protected characteristics 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 a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment, victimisation or bullying are dealt with by a member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher/Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the Governing body and Local Authority on a termly basis.

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 including the use of social networking sites
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups
- Ridicule of an individual for difference
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation and other protected characteristics

All members of the school community are responsible for promoting the school's Equality Policy and are obliged to respect and act in accordance with it.