



# St. Mary's C of E Primary School, Timsbury

## Equality and Diversity Policy

As a Church school and holding the B&NES Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM), equality and diversity are central to our ethos, and every child is valued as a unique individual. Governors and staff are committed to ensuring no one is discriminated against on any grounds, including race, gender, disability, religion or belief, age, or sexual orientation.

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of St. Mary's C of E Primary School and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

This policy replaces previous separate but related policies for Disability Discrimination, Racial Equality, and Equal Opportunities. We have adopted the single equality scheme for the Bath and NE Somerset Partnership, and from it have developed our own three year strategic action plan.

### **1 Introduction**

Governors at St. Mary's C of E Primary School are committed to promoting outstanding practice in equality and diversity, ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination against pupils, job applicants, or staff. The Governing Body complies with its general duties under the following acts:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)
- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
- Equality Act 2010

We follow the specific duties in subordinate legislation made under the Acts, and the requirements of the statutory codes of practice made under these acts. This policy sets out our commitment to equality and diversity for all members of our community, to ensure that no one is discriminated against on grounds of

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|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Race              | • Sexual orientation             |
| • Gender            | • Pregnancy and maternity        |
| • Disability        | • Marriage and civil partnership |
| • Religion / belief | • Gender reassignment            |
| • Age               |                                  |

These are often referred to as the 'nine strands' and our single equality scheme and action plan seeks to address them all. In addition, we recognise that discrimination could also be related to: financial or economic status, HIV status, homelessness or lack of a fixed address, political view or trade union activity or unrelated criminal activities and we seek to ensure that no one is discriminated against on these grounds.

This policy, in conjunction with the SEN policy, fully meets the specific legal requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, May 2008, in respect of equality of opportunities. It covers both school provision and extended services provided by the school.

We encourage children to value diversity in others from the earliest age. We keep alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties and respond quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies where necessary.

## 2 Aims And Objectives

- 2.1 In line with the Bath and North East Somerset Partnership, we are committed to:
- eliminating unlawful discrimination in respect of all nine strands
  - eliminating harassment in respect of all nine strands
  - promoting equality of opportunity in respect of all nine strands
  - promoting good relations between people of different racial groups
  - promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people
  - encouraging participation by disabled people in public life
  - taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.
- 2.2 Through good induction procedures and liaison with other agencies, we anticipate children's needs before they join us, so that we can plan for this. Where these needs will not be met by the general provision of the school, an appropriate action plan will be drawn up and implemented. This is the responsibility of the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator and is covered by our separate SEN Policy
- 2.3 We are committed to working closely with parents and other agencies, recognising the importance of a holistic approach to pupils' needs; this underpins all practice.
- 2.4 As an inclusive school we value and support all children, working closely with the Local Authority to make any reasonable adjustments deemed necessary.
- 2.5 We value diversity and difference in all aspects of school life and this is reflected in our curriculum provision.
- 2.6 We challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices whenever they occur, seeking to work in a supportive and non confrontational way with families or staff, recognising this can be a learning opportunity for us all.
- 2.7 Valuing and respecting others is woven into our curriculum and school routines.
- 2.8 Any discriminatory incidents are recorded in our incident book and must be reported to the Headteacher or the Deputy Head, who will be responsible for taking appropriate action, including reporting to the Local Authority as appropriate.
- 2.9 This policy is reviewed biennially by governors, along with the single equality action plan. We monitor its impact and progress through questionnaires and discussions with our stakeholders. Governors also review the complaints log and incident book to ensure the school has dealt effectively with any issues arising.

## 3 Racial Equality

- 3.1 In our school, the overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage. We are aware that racial diversity is significantly below national levels and seek to make pupils aware of the racial diversity in this country. We also recognise there are other minority groups such as travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.
- 3.2 We do not tolerate any forms of racism or racist behaviour, or harassment. Should a racist incident occur, we will investigate it thoroughly and deal with it in accordance with school and Local Authority procedures and behaviour policy.
- 3.3 We endeavour to make our school welcoming to all minority groups. We promote an understanding of diverse cultures through the topics studied by the children, and we reflect this in displays around the school and the resources we choose to use.
- 3.4 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.

## **4 Gender Equality**

- 4.1 The school has effective procedures in place to track the attainment and progress of all pupils, and identifies and addresses any underachievement, recognising that in small cohorts, it is important not to generalise the significance of gender. The school does recognise that there is some variance in key performance indicators for boys and girls and that this often varies from cohort to cohort. We have strategies in place to help address identified differences in gender attainment. We realise that although gender is one of the key factors affecting educational performance, social class, ethnic origin and local context are all important.
- 4.2 Governors view all job applications equally, whether from male or female applicants.
- 4.3 We work in partnership with both mothers and fathers, recognising there can be access problems for working parents. Our data collection indicates it is more likely to be the mother who is identified as the first point of contact. We address this through clear communication, including the website and late appointments for working parents.

## **5 Disability Equality**

- 5.1 This school is committed to meet fully its requirements in part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and any subsequent requirements and has regard to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) code of practice for schools (2002).
- 5.2 The Disability and Discrimination Act states that 'a person suffers from a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day to day activities'.
- 5.3 Prospective employees will not be asked about their health/disabilities as part of the interviewing process.
- 5.4 Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments, learning difficulties and certain medical conditions. We recognise that this is not the same as special needs, although there may be some overlap between them.
- 5.5 We have good policies and procedures for the storage and administration of medicines, and we work closely with the school nurse to ensure that all staff have training in how to deal with all relevant medical conditions.
- 5.6 We have taken reasonable steps to ensure disabled children and adults will have the same opportunities as those without disabilities, and this has involved changes to the buildings including disabled toilets and a stair lift.
- 5.7 The School Accessibility Plan covers the changes we have already made and those still planned for the school addressing the physical environment, the curriculum, and communication, to ensure disabled children have full access to all areas of learning. This is available to parents on request; we report annually on progress made towards targets on the equality scheme and accessibility plan.

## **6. Religion Or Belief Equality**

- 6.1 The school population reflects the local statistics for religion, with over 75% of the pupil population being Christian. As a Church School we teach the agreed Diocesan syllabus for Religious Education and provide a daily act of worship which is Christian.
- 6.2 We recognise that approximately 24% of families will have no religion and fewer than 1% will observe minority religions. Parents are made aware of their right to withdraw pupils from Collective Worship and Religious Education, but the school works closely with

identified families to ensure that where possible, pupils can be part of these events, which are an important part of school life.

- 6.3 Pupils are taught respect for all religions and beliefs and learn about other world faiths in Religious Education. Tolerance and respect are also a part of our entire curriculum, both explicit and implicit.
- 6.4 As a Church school, all staff are expected to be sympathetic to the Christian faith, and there is an expectation that teaching staff will attend collective worship and support the aims of our Church foundation, however; staff and applicants for jobs will not be discriminated against on grounds of their faith.

## **7 Age Equality**

- 7.1 The school recognises and values all its stakeholders, irrespective of age.
- 7.2 From the start, even the youngest pupils are given jobs and responsibilities around the school. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 are represented on the School Council.
- 7.3 The school works closely with families and identifies and addresses issues such as young parents.
- 7.4 Good recruitment procedures are in place and value people of all ages. This is reflected in the wide age range of current staff.
- 7.5 Volunteers and governors demonstrate a good range of ages, indicating that all are equally valued.

## **8 Sexual Orientation And Gender Reassignment Equality**

- 8.1 We are committed to identifying and tackling any homophobia within our school and dealing with any discrimination.
- 8.2 Pupils are made aware that any name calling or unkind behaviour will not be tolerated, and incidents are recorded and followed through as with all discrimination incidents.
- 8.3 Governors are aware that the Council has a 'homophobia in schools' group, and will seek training packages from this group to tackle any homophobia identified.
- 8.4 Within the Equality Act 2010 there are a number of 'protected characteristics' which include sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Good recruitment procedures help to ensure that when recruiting staff, appointment panels take particular care not to treat someone less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic that they have.

## **9 Marriage And Civil Partnership Equality**

- 9.1 The school commits to ensure parity of treatment to same sex and opposite sex couples and to those who are married or in civil partnership.
- 9.2 Same-sex couples who register as civil partners have the same rights as married couples in employment and will be provided with the same benefits available to married couples, such as survivor pensions, flexible working, maternity/paternity pay.
- 9.3 Good recruitment procedures help protect against discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership throughout the whole employment relationship, including: recruitment and selection, terms of employment, benefits provided during employment and on termination, promotion opportunities, access to training, dismissal (including redundancy) and retirement.

## 10 Pregnancy And Maternity

- 10.1 The school will not discriminate against women on the grounds of pregnancy and compulsory or additional maternity leave. A woman will be protected from discrimination during the period of her pregnancy and during any period of compulsory or additional maternity leave.
- 10.2 Personnel procedures are in place to protect against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity throughout the whole employment relationship, including: terms of employment, benefits provided during employment and on termination, promotion opportunities, access to training, dismissal (including redundancy), retirement and post termination discrimination and harassment.

## 11 The Role Of Governors

- 11.1 This policy addresses the statutory responsibilities of governors in relation to equality, diversity and disability as laid out by Ofsted 2009 and the Equality Act 2010. Through it, governors ensure that no one is discriminated against on grounds of:
- Race
  - Gender
  - Disability
  - Religion / belief
  - Age
  - Sexual orientation
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Gender reassignment
- 11.2 The governing body analyses and evaluates a range of school data. We check that all pupils are making the best possible progress, and that no group of pupils is underachieving as a result of discrimination.
- 11.3 The governing body reviews and improves practice and policy to ensure it does not discriminate unlawfully against pupils, job applicants or staff, and is responsible for ensuring a single equality scheme is in place.
- 11.4 Governors are accountable to Ofsted for the effective monitoring of the single equality scheme and the ensuing Equality Action Plan.
- 11.5 Governors review the impact this scheme and action plan have in practice, on staff, learners and parents.

## 12 The Role Of The Headteacher

- 12.1 It is the headteacher's role to implement the school's policy on equality and diversity and s/he is supported by the governing body.
- 12.2 It is the headteacher's role to make sure that all staff are aware of the school policy, and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- 12.3 The headteacher ensures that all appointment panels give due regard to this policy, so that no one is discriminated against.
- 12.4 The headteacher promotes the principle of equality when developing the curriculum and in providing opportunities for training.
- 12.5 The headteacher promotes respect for other people in all aspects of school life.

- 12.6 The headteacher reviews all incidents of unfair treatment, and takes appropriate action. In the case of **children**, incidents may be reported to their parent/carer and a course of action agreed upon to resolve the situation. In the case of **staff**, provisions within the LA Staff Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures policy will be activated and a record of the incident will be kept and made available to statutory authorities if appropriate.

### **13 The Role Of The Class Teacher**

- 13.1 Class teachers do their best to ensure that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect. We do not knowingly discriminate against any child.
- 13.2 When selecting classroom material, teachers strive to provide resources that give positive images, and which challenge stereotypical images of minority groups.
- 13.3 We seek to implement this policy when designing schemes of work, both in our choice of topics to study and in how we approach sensitive issues.
- 13.4 All our teachers and support staff challenge any incidents of prejudice or racism. We record any incidents in the school log book, and draw them to the attention of the headteacher.

### **14 Monitoring And Review**

- 14.1 It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. This will be monitored in line with Ofsted requirements and will form part of the school cycle of self evaluation and continued improvement. It will be formally reviewed in term three, on alternate years (biennially).

Adopted by the Governing Body:  
First Review:  
**Next Review**

May 2015  
May 2017  
**May 2020**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors