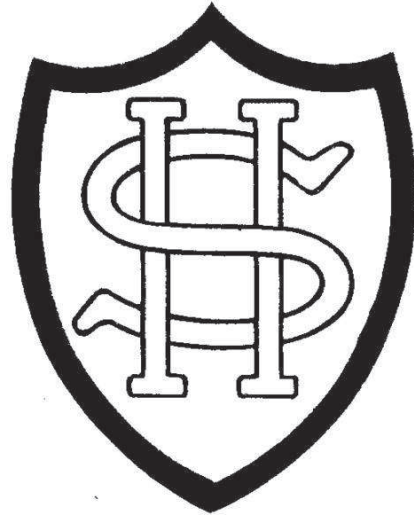


Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School



EQUALITY POLICY

Equality Policy

This equality policy brings together all previous policies, schemes and action plans around equality including those that we had previously for Race, Gender and Disability. It includes all the protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act 2010 as well as other aspects which have the potential to discriminate against or to devalue any individuals within our community. We are further committed to the development of cohesive communities both within our school's physical boundaries and within our local, national and global environments. Our school embraces the aim of working together with others to improve children's educational and wellbeing outcomes, and notes the rights set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As a Catholic school, our admissions policy gives preference to members of the Catholic faith. (Exceptions from the Public Sector Equality duty April 2011). **See existing policies SEN, G and T, Behaviour, F.S. policy and P.H.S.E.**

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies - who we have engaged with and who have been actively involved in and contributed to its development.

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

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity and
- foster good relations between groups

It explains how we aim to listen to and involve pupils, staff, parents and the community in achieving better outcomes for our children and young people.

Our school within the wider context

The national demographic presents an ever-changing picture in terms of age, ethnicity, disability and social deprivation.

Our own school data taken from Annual Children's Services Equality Data report, RAISE online data, LPC data, indicate that the vulnerable pupils in our school are children with disabilities and those who have special educational needs. (See vulnerable pupil registers.)

Overall aims of our Equality Policy

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- To promote equality of access and opportunity within our school and within our wider community.
- To promote positive attitudes to difference and good relationships between people with different backgrounds, genders, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.
- To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life.

Our approach

We seek to embed equality of access, opportunity and outcome for all members of our school community, within all aspects of school life.

We actively seek out opportunities to embrace the following key concepts:

Reviewed: September 2015

Next review: September 2017

Shared Humanity. Identifying commonality and shared values, aspirations and needs underpins our approach to equality. We value our fundamental similarities and universality
Valuing difference and diversity. We appreciate the richness within our differences and look for ways of celebrating and understanding them better. We recognise that, as they evolve, distinct cultures, beliefs and lifestyles will impact on and inform each other.

Social cohesion within our school and within our local community.

Excellence. We aim to inspire and recognise high personal and collective achievement throughout our community, the UK and the wider world.

Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities

Fairness and social justice. We will develop our understanding of the inequality that exists in society and explore ways of individually and collectively promoting a more equitable society.

Our school vision is to:

**provide an excellent education for all
which encompasses
spiritual, intellectual, moral and social growth
within a friendly, secure and stimulating
environment;
where everyone is valued
and encouraged to develop fully;
where we are committed
to raising standards and achievement
throughout the school community
in an orderly and industrious atmosphere;
where Gospel values
are at the heart of the school and are shared
with the wider community around us.
EXCELLENCE THROUGH FAITH AND LEARNING**

Our duties

We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and have sought to involve the whole school community in the process in order to ensure better outcomes for all.

We will ensure we identify opportunities for promoting our vision, the key concepts and our duties on equality legislation across all aspects of school life, including the provision of extended services.

These opportunities include all or some of the following:

The engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, their parents and partner agencies:

- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals

Reviewed: September 2015

Next review: September 2017

- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment
- exam arrangements
- behaviour management approach and sanctions
- exclusion procedures
- school clubs, activities and school trips
- the school's arrangements for working with other agencies
- preparation of pupils for secondary transfer
- learning and teaching and the planned curriculum
- classroom organisation
- timetabling
- grouping of pupils
- homework
- access to school facilities
- activities to enrich the curriculum, for example, a visitor to the school
- school sports

The roles and responsibilities within our school community

Our Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff, parents/carers, pupils and visitors are engaged in the development of and informed about the Equality Policy
- oversee the effective implementation of the scheme
- ensure staff have access to training which helps to implement the scheme
- develop partnerships with external agencies regarding the policy so that the school's actions are in line with the best advice available
- monitor the scheme and report to the Governing Body at least annually on the effectiveness of the policy
- ensure that the Senior Management team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

Our governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy .
- ensure that the action plans arising from the policy are part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- support the head teacher in implementing any actions necessary
- engage with parents and partner agencies about the scheme
- evaluate and review this scheme every two years

Our Senior Management Team will:

- have responsibility for supporting other staff in implementing this Policy
- provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to the Policy
- with the head teacher, provide advice in dealing with any incidents
- assist in implementing reviews of this scheme as detailed in the SIP .

Our pupils will be involved in the policy through the school council and pupil voice.

Parents/carers will

- be given opportunities to become involved in the development of the Policy through a focus group (a chosen parent representative)

Reviewed: September 2015

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- be encouraged to actively support the Policy
- be encouraged to attend any relevant meetings and activities related to the Policy
- be informed of any incident related to this Policy which could directly affect their child

Our school staff will:

- be involved in the development of the Policy
- be fully aware of the Equality Policy and how it relates to them
- understand that this is a whole school issue and support the Equality Policy
- make known any queries or training requirements

Relevant community groups (a chosen parish representative) will:

- Be involved in the development of the Policy
- Be encouraged to support the Policy

How we developed our Policy - Engagement and Involvement

The development of this scheme has involved the whole of our school community. We've engaged with them and listened to what they have to say including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010

Our pupils/students have been involved through School Council, Pupil Voice, via the EPR and R.E. curriculum, vulnerable pupils through the ILT (Inclusive learning tutor), social workers, school nurse, EAL team.

Our staff through the senior management team, teaching assistants, cleaners, caretakers, mid-day supervisors, catering staff, administration staff.

Our school governors through governor meetings.

Parents/Carers via the school website, questionnaires and newsletters

We have tried to access those parents/carers who are less likely to become involved through the EAL service, Inclusive Learning Tutors, parent information contact.

- We have made adjustments to facilitate participation by disabled people. We have a ramp into the school via the Year 1 classroom and have a disabled toilet. The new hall and buildings have been built to promote access for disabled pupils.
- We have links with local special schools and we receive support from Torfield Outreach Service for pupils with autism.
- We have strong links with the local community through the local parish church, sporting events and arts events.
- The EAL Service liaises with parents through meetings and gives support and resources where possible for children with English as an additional language.
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How we are developing our Policy - Using information

- We are using data and other information about our school, as a common sense measure to determine the effects of the policy and practice on different groups.

- In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways.
- E.g. RAISE online data, incident reporting data.
- We also complete a Self-Evaluation which means we are constantly monitoring the make-up and needs of our staff and pupils – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.
- We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil voice.

The LEA provides us with a range of services which support the equality agenda and helps us to identify our strengths and those areas requiring action.

School makes use of services to schools and services across the Children's Trust. School links with the Behaviour & Attendance Service, health partners, Sussex Police, the Traveller Education and English as an Additional Language Service (TEALS) and East Sussex Equality and Participation team. We have established good links with our local and wider community especially our local parish church of St Mary Star-of-the-Sea.

We welcome visitors into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

Commissioned services (buying in services)

We work closely with the local authority on procurement – buying in services - to ensure that equality issues are given full regard.

Our Staff

We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on the protected characteristics. With regard to disability, we make such reasonable adjustments as are necessary to prevent a disabled person being at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with people who are not disabled. We will ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and take seriously and act on incidents of harassment and discrimination recognising that our staff may be either victims or perpetrators. We interpret our duties positively; take the necessary actions to remove barriers to inclusion and work hard to ensure a safe, positive and inclusive environment.

Staff have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the different needs of protected groups within our school community. (See Appendix)

Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying

We recognise that hate incidents or prejudice – based bullying behaviour is driven by negative assumptions, stereotypes or misinformation. These are then directed against an individual or group, based on difference (real or perceived), and linked to, for example, racism, homophobia, negative views of disabled people or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

We recognise that we as individuals and society often struggle with difference of any kind (perceived or actual), which can result in seizing upon the most visible sign of difference e.g. skin colour or disability.

Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore the subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. Incidents in class or in the playground

Reviewed: September 2015

Next review: September 2017

are recorded in log books, along with any action taken by staff. The log books are monitored daily by a member of the Senior Management Team and, where necessary, the Headteacher will discuss the matter with parents. We will use this information to identify any trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families.

Implementation, monitoring and reviewing

This policy was first put into place in Sept 2011. It has been actively developed throughout recent years. A small focus group has been set up to include the SENCO, (G. Braidwood), governor, (Mr. Calladine-Evans) parent (school to find) and representative from the parish (school to find). The focus group meets termly to monitor and review the policy and report back to the Senior Management Team and governors. They will report annually on the policy and analyse whether its objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty with reference to the protected groups.