

# St John's Meads Church of England Primary School

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## Equality Policy and Objectives

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## 1. Why we developed this Equality Policy

This Equality Policy for St John's Meads CE Primary School 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 directly or indirectly 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.

**Equality Act 2010** - Harmonised and streamlined legislation that came before it.

The Act refers to protected characteristics:

- Disability
- Age
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on public bodies including maintained schools and academies.

This combined **Equality Duty** came into effect in April 2011. It has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies are required to **have due regard to the need to:**

- **Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation**
- **Advance equality of opportunity**
- **Foster good relations between groups**

Our Equality Policy is inclusive of our whole school community – pupils/students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and partner agencies. 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.

## 2. Our school within the wider context

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

2.2 St John's Meads CE Primary School works with and employs a wide age range. Only a small percentage of the ethnicity of the school is culturally diverse. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is wide-ranging but average overall. The socio-economic circumstances of pupils are above average. The proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities is slightly below average. A number of pupils enter or leave the school at times other than the normal point of entry. Most later entrants join the school between Years 3 to 6.

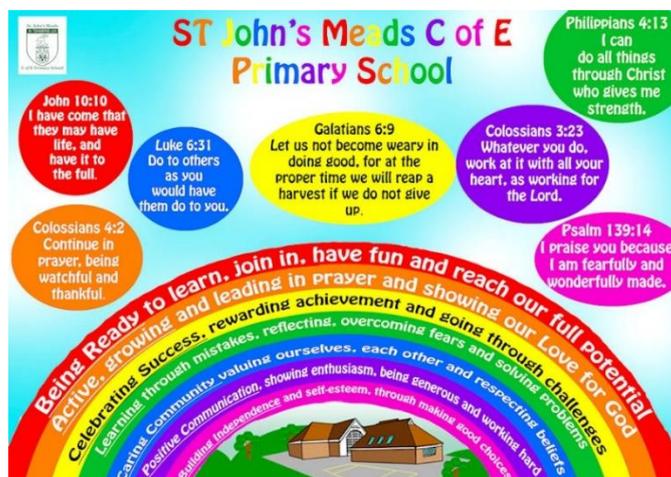
Our school Vision:

Loving learning and loving one another, as God loves us.

Celebrating success in its many forms and overcoming challenges.

Praying for and caring for our whole community.

Learning to live in the light of Christ and as a light to others.



## 3. 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, sexual orientation, cultures, faiths, abilities and ethnic origins.

To ensure that equality and inclusive practice are embedded across all aspects of school life the Equality Policy refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes recognition of a range of educational, wellbeing, and material outcomes <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

Issues relating to adults within the school community can be embraced under these themes and reflected in the action plan.

#### **4. 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.

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

- 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. For example, by raising awareness of difference through assemblies on topics such as: neurodiversity, Downs Syndrome, haemophilia, hearing impairment and raising money for charities such as AVUK and Reach (limb difference) – these differences being relevant within our school community.
- Interdependence, interaction and influence. 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. Excellence is to be found everywhere.
- Personal and cultural identity. We will provide opportunities to explore and value the complexity of our personal and cultural identities. For example, by inviting parents into school to share their language and culture with their child's class.
- 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.
- We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school. We link with schools and charities in the local area to support children, teachers and those in need where appropriate. We have global links to Chilwa 2 School in Malawi.

By listening to those within our community and to our partners, we are able to identify new areas of work, improve existing approaches and focus our energy where it is required.

4.2 St John's Meads CE Primary School seeks to foster warm, welcoming and respectful environments, which allow us to question and challenge discrimination and inequality, resolve conflicts peacefully and work and learn free from harassment and violence.

4.3 We recognise that there are similarities and differences between individuals and groups but we will strive to ensure that our differences do not become barriers to participation, access and learning and to create inclusive processes and practices, where the varying needs of individuals and groups are identified and met. We therefore cannot achieve equality for all by treating everyone the same.

4.4 We will build on our similarities and seek enrichment from our differences and so promote understanding and learning between and towards others to create cohesive communities.

## **5. Our duties**

5.1 We recognise and accept our equality duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010. We have due regard to the need to ensure that persons with a protected characteristic are not disproportionately, negatively impacted as a result of our decision or policy making. We positively foster good relations between different groups of pupils and the wider school community.

5.2 We will consider whether to provide auxiliary aids that are directly related to disabled children's educational needs as a reasonable adjustment, particularly where the child is not provided for under an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan), or where the EHCP does not provide the auxiliary aid or service.

We are also guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:  
<http://www.unicef.org.uk/Education/Rights-Respecting-Schools-Award/Childrens-rights/>

**5.3 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.**

**5.4 These opportunities are likely to include all or some of the following, dependent on our current priorities.**

- the engagement, participation and involvement of a broad and diverse range of children, young people, their parents and partner agencies
- preparation for entry to the school
- school policies
- breaks and lunchtimes
- the provision of school meals
- interaction with peers
- opportunities for assessment and accreditation
- 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 the next phase of education
- learning and teaching 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
- staff welfare

## **6. The roles and responsibilities within our school community**

### **6.1 Our Headteacher will:**

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

### **6.2 Our Local Governing Body will:**

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for the Equality Policy
- ensure that the objectives arising from the policy are part of the School Development Plan (SDP)
- support the Headteacher in implementing any actions necessary
- evaluate and review the policy annually and the objectives every 4 years.

### **6.3 Our Senior Leadership 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 Headteacher, provide advice/support in dealing with any incidents/issues
- assist in implementing reviews of this policy as detailed in the SDP.

### **6.4 Our pupils/students will:**

- be involved in the ongoing development of the Policy and will understand how it relates to them, appropriate to age and ability
- be expected to act in accordance with the Policy
- be encouraged to actively support the Policy.

### **6.5 Our parents/carers will:**

- have access to the Policy through a range of different media appropriate to their requirements
- 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.

### **6.6 Our school staff will:**

- be involved in the ongoing 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.

## **7. The development and ongoing implementation of this policy.**

7.1 We use a common sense measure of determining whether a policy, practice or project will impact on all groups equally or whether it potentially may have a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). It helps us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that positive duties are promoted equally. It is a way to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

7.2 In addition, we know our school well because we regularly collect information about ourselves in a variety of ways and other people help us to do this.

7.3 We collect a range of information relating to incidents of harassment and bullying including those relating to racism, homophobia, disability and gender.

7.4 We also complete a Self-Evaluation Framework (SEF) which means we are constantly monitoring the make-up and needs of our staff and pupils/students – and assessing how well we are meeting those needs.

7.5 We also value more qualitative information which may be given to us through pupil voice mechanisms, less formally or even anonymously. These are achieved through pupil questionnaire comments and evaluations.

7.6 We have used data and other information about our school, and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) (Appendix A) as a common sense measure to determine the effects of a policy, practice or project on different groups. EQIAs help us to analyse whether what we are planning potentially has a differential impact on one or more particular group (either positively or negatively). They help us to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against certain individuals or groups and that the positive duties are promoted. They help to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our pupils/students and staff and that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

7.7 We have established good links with our local and our wider community. We welcome them into our school. From them, we learn about equality issues outside school and can establish mechanisms for addressing them within school. We link with schools and charities in the local area to support children, teachers and those in need where appropriate. We have a global link to Chilwa 2 School in Malawi.

## **8. Commissioned services (buying in services)**

Increasingly we are directly responsible for the purchase of goods and services and we ensure that equality issues are given full regard. When buying goods and services from external suppliers, we ask the following questions to help ensure that equality issues and

duties are taken into account:

- Could the proposed procurement affect the duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity amongst the school community?
- If so, is there a need to include some equality requirement within the contract and what would this be?

We ensure that contract conditions require contractors to comply with the relevant legislation and with our equality policy and we require similar compliance by any sub-contractors.

## **9. Our Staff**

9.1 We comply fully with legislation which protects our staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, supervisors and student teachers) from discrimination based on association with or the perception of 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.

9.2 This includes discrimination in relation to recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals, training and employment practices (such as dress codes) and disciplinary procedures. We make efforts to ensure that the diversity of our workforce reflects that of our local community and wider society.

9.3 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.

9.4 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.

9.5 Our staff team have undertaken training to help them understand their equality duties/and or the differing needs of protected groups within our school community. We have mechanisms in place to identify areas for development.

## **10. Responding to hate or prejudice-based incidents and bullying**

10.1 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 people with disabilities or sexism. We will take action to prevent, challenge and eliminate any such behaviour.

10.2 We recognise that individuals and society can 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.

10.3 Through our school ethos and curriculum, we want our pupils/students to understand better the diversity that exists in society. We want to provide opportunities for them to explore subtleties and complexities in order to prevent and respond to incidents and situations. We will address the experience, understanding and needs of the victim, the perpetrator, bystanders and the wider school community through our actions and responses.

10.4 We will record all hate incidents and prejudice based bullying. We will use this information to identify trends and patterns, so that we have approaches in place to provide appropriate responses in terms of support for victims and their families, sanctions and support for perpetrators and their families and education for our children, young people and communities.

- We are opposed to all forms of racial prejudice, harassment and discrimination.
- Racist, homophobic or any other form of discriminatory behaviour, language or comments are not accepted and will be challenged.
- Whilst we recognise the issues are complex and sometimes difficult to grapple with, we cannot ignore them, the distress of the victim will be taken seriously and we will deal with incidents promptly, consistently and openly.
- We will foster an open and supportive climate that will help pupils and adults express issues of concern. Preventing and responding to hate incidents and prejudice based bullying is the responsibility of all members of the school community.
- **The following procedures are carried out for all incidents:**

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1. Respond - investigate thoroughly.
2. Record and report - using own school recording procedures (CPOMS).
3. Inform parents/carers of the pupils involved in the reported incident.
4. Ensure the senior management team is kept up to date with any development affecting the policy or actions arising from it.

## **11 Implementation, monitoring and reviewing**

11.1 This policy will be actively promoted and disseminated.

11.2 Implementation, monitoring and review are the responsibility of our Senior Leadership Team and our governors who have agreed and published this policy which sets out our priorities and supports these with specific and measurable objectives.

11.3 We will report annually on the policy and analyse whether our policy and related objectives have furthered the aims of the general equality duty and in particular educational outcomes for all within our school community with reference to the protected groups.

## **12 Equality Objectives**

Using the views of pupils, parents, staff and the community and analysis of the information outlined above we have set ourselves specific and measurable objectives that will help us achieve the aims of the general equality duty. These are shown below.

**These will be reviewed and published at least every 4 years.**



**EQUALITY OBJECTIVES: September 2019 - September 2023**

Link to Public Sector Equality Duty	Protected characteristic	Aim:	Objective:	Target group(s): e.g. whole school, girls, boys, SEN, staff etc	Action:	Who's responsible?	Dates from and to:	Milestone/progress:
<b>1. All aims of duty</b>	All protected characteristics	To increase the participation of pupils/students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school life	Increase the diversity of pupils/students involved in the decision-making processes of the school	Minority, marginalised and vulnerable pupils/students	Identify which groups are under-represented in the School Council and/or pupil voice processes within the school  Set up group of pupils/students to develop actions which better involve the target group	SLT School Council lead teachers/ TAs	Ongoing	Councils have representatives of different ethnicity/pupils with SEND/Pupils eligible for PP funding/pupils with EAL
<b>2. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	Sexual Orientation/ Race/ Gender identity/ Disability /Religion or belief	To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudiced based bullying	Pupils feel safer as reported in safer schools survey as feel incidents will be dealt with.  Increased staff confidence  Implementation of CPOMS reporting for anti-social behaviour and hate incident reporting to improve accuracy and increase reporting rates.	Whole school and specifically BAME /LBGTU/SEND pupils/students or those from a Faith background	To review and update existing policies and practice relating to bullying (Opportunity to carry out EQIA).  Ensure continuing professional development for staff to develop skills in identifying and challenging homophobia and transphobia  Promotion of hate incident recording to students.	SLT Anti-bullying lead (PSHE Coordinator)	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Pupil/ Parent questionnaires about pupils feeling safe and behaviour/ bullying incidents. Behaviour incidents are reviewed on a weekly basis by SLT Patterns/trends are identified
<b>3a. Advance equality of opportunity</b>	All	To promote healthy body images and challenge negative stereotyping.	Build self- esteem through the planned curriculum.	All pupils and staff	PSHE curriculum Science curriculum Healthy eating/ lunchbox awareness/newsletter reminders	SLT	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Regular Pupil Voice and pupil questionnaires identify continuous regard for what is needed for healthy packed lunches and break time snacks. Regular newsletter item

<b>3b. Advance equality of opportunity</b>	Disability / All	To increase social and emotional skills for pupils/students with BESD (Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties)	Improved ability by pupils/students to handle difficult situations and a reduction in classroom disruption	Pupils/students with BESD	Train staff to deliver small group work sessions to support targeted pupils/students in developing social and emotional skills (Thrive/Nurture)	All staff Thrive coordinator	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Training identified and implemented for individuals as needs are highlighted (through pupil data and progress meetings/ outside agency observations etc.)
<b>3c. Advance equality of opportunity</b>	Disability - parents and carers	To better understand the needs of disabled parents/carers within our school community	Improved access and communication with disabled parents/carers	Disabled parents/carers	Gather and record information relating to disabled parents	SLT	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Discussions held discreetly with disabled parents about access to school site and other needs
<b>3d. Advance equality of opportunity</b>	Social Deprivation	To improve the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals/pupil premium	Improved attainment	Pupils eligible for free school meals/pupil premium	Collate and analyse data relating to attainment by target group. 1:1 and group interventions	SLT Pupil Premium Champion (SENCO)	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Review data with regard to attainment and progress compared to non PP pupils.
<b>3e. Advance equality of opportunity</b>	Disability	Ensure children with disability are closely monitored and targets set for them. Ensure appropriate pathways for pupil success.	Improved attainment.	Pupils with disability	Pupil progress meetings held termly. Teacher meetings and TA meetings held regularly and 'vulnerable children' on every agenda. Regular review of EHCP/APDRs/ANP plans as appropriate	Class teachers. SENCO	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Tracking identifies of children who may need intervention
<b>4. Fostering good relations</b>	Age	To improve understanding and to challenge stereotyping between young and older people	Increased positive attitudes towards each other	KS2	Pupils given opportunities to link with older people through visits to care homes, work with parishioners and inviting volunteers and visitors into school	Class teachers Children and Families Leader Music Lead	Sept 2019 Ongoing	Singing at local care homes, Volunteers used in school include older people- eg Open the Book

## **Appendix A**

### **What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?**

An EQIA is a considered way of determining whether a policy, practice or project will affect all groups equally or whether it potentially may have a disproportionate impact on one or more particular groups.

EQIAs should help us ensure we are not unlawfully discriminating against certain individuals or groups and that we are promoting our positive duties on equality. It is a way to ensure we are meeting the diverse needs of all our pupils and staff.

EQIAs should help ensure that diversity, equality and inclusion run through all areas of school life.

This does not mean undertaking EQIAs for all policies and practices as of now. It is a process of thinking that can be included in the review of policies as part of the policy review cycle. EQIAs can also be considered for all new policies and specific projects, e.g. use of the school playground.

It is not about more paperwork. It is a common sense approach to thinking through how policies and actions will impact on race, disability, gender and other equality areas.

Impact on these areas could be positive, neutral or negative.

If the impact on different groups is not justifiable, what solutions can we come up with to overcome this situation?

#### **Key questions:**

What are the aims of the policy, practice or project?

What are the specific outcomes you hope to see?

Who are the intended beneficiaries of this policy or practice? (e.g. all staff/students?)

Can you identify any potential adverse or negative impacts in the implementation of this policy, practice or project for certain individuals or groups – on the basis of their ethnic origin, cultural background, faith, disability, SEN, gender, sexual orientation, age, and other criteria (for example EAL, asylum seekers)?

Identify whom and how?

Are there any positive impacts? On whom and how?

What evidence do you have to inform your thinking? This can include data, e.g. attainment data.

***If you think there may be negative impact on certain individuals or groups it is important to draw together relevant, reliable data and information.***

Who can you involve in your policy/practice review or project proposal which will help you identify any differential impact?

***Involving the children, young people, staff and members of the community who may be affected by your policy, practice or project will provide the best opportunity of identifying impact, exploring solutions and supporting implementation.***

If you have thought through the impact of a policy or action and involved people in this thinking, you may still not have uncovered the likely differential impact on certain individuals or groups. That is OK, that will happen. The point is to bear this in mind in the monitoring and review process and allow flexibility to respond to new information.