



Equality and Diversity Policy

March 2017

Next review March 2021

Introduction

Church Stretton School is committed to promoting equal opportunities, valuing diversity and tackling social exclusion. We aim to equip children with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. All policy principles are within national guidelines and legislation. At Church Stretton School, every child matters irrespective of his creed, culture, class, race, sexuality and/or disability. Every aspect of Church Stretton School activity has an equal opportunities dimension. This may be expressed explicitly in teaching and displays materials, implicitly in classroom practice, or as part of the 'hidden curriculum' of social interaction amongst and between staff and children.

The Church Stretton School environment influences the developing attitudes of the children within it and can be a powerful vehicle for the promotion of understanding and practice of equal opportunities.

We live in a society where disability discrimination segregates and isolates people from their communities. Church Stretton School aims through its proactive approach of inclusion to enable all children to an equality of access to the Church Stretton School community. Addressing fundamental prejudices against disability in both children and adults is a core 'hidden' element of our inclusion work.

Aim

Church Stretton School aims to foster a sense of community in which all students and staff are valued and can thrive, regardless of background, religion, race, language, ability/disability, sexuality, gender or age. We will not tolerate racism, sexism, negative attitudes towards disability and other discriminatory practices. Any breach of this policy is dealt with by the appropriate member of staff or line manager. Where further action is needed, this will be taken in line with the school behaviour management policy or staff disciplinary procedure or complaints policy. This Policy takes into account The Equality Act 2010 and The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties).

Objectives

We aim to:

- Encourage students to be open-minded and challenge prejudice;
- Help students to develop their self-esteem and to recognise that they are each valued as individuals through actively encouraging their access to the full curriculum and extra-curricular activities;
- Demonstrate that students are respected as individuals;
- Help each student to achieve their full potential;
- Enable students to contribute actively to the process of education by bringing their cultural experiences, values and perspectives to it;

- Be sensitive about equal opportunities issues in the selection of teaching materials and be aware of images and text, which may stereotype or denigrate groups or individuals;
- Ensure that Church Stretton School is an equal opportunities employer so that staff feel valued, supported and have appropriate advice and encouragement for professional development and use our resources to help those who need additional help to overcome barriers.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Treating all those within the whole school community (e.g. Students, staff, governors, parents/carers and community) as individuals with their own particular abilities, beliefs, challenges, attitudes, background and experiences;
- Creating a school ethos which promotes equality, develops understanding and challenges myths, stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices;
- Encouraging everyone within our school community to gain a positive self-image and high self-esteem;
- Having high expectations of everyone involved with the whole school;
- Promoting mutual respect and valuing others' similarities and differences and
- Facing equality issues openly;
- Striving to identify and remove all practices, procedures and customs which are discriminatory and replace them with practices which are fair to all and
- Monitoring and reviewing all of the above to seek to secure continuous improvement.

This statement of Equal Opportunities requires a commitment from every member of the school community. It is based upon our Code of Conduct that rests upon the principles of Respect, Responsibility and Co-operation.

All school practice will ensure that:

Gender

- All students have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at Church Stretton School as appropriate;
- Teaching and associated staff are aware that gender stereotyping may influence their expectations and attitudes. Teaching ethos and curriculum organisation should actively encourage students to make choices based on their preferences and staff act as positive role models.

Disability

- Students will be encouraged to have an awareness and understanding of disability, which will be promoted through the Personal and Social Development lessons;
- All staff will be aware of the specific individual needs of students with disabilities and will provide appropriate support and school access will be appropriate for all students (See school Accessibility Policy).

Race

- The whole school abides by the Equality Act 2010 which protects people against discrimination, harassment or victimisation in employment and as users of private and public services based on nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The protected characteristic “gender reassignment” does not change a person’s sex.
- Appropriate actions will be taken in line with our Behaviour policy in dealing with any incident of physical or verbal threats, abuse or harassment of individuals or groups related to their religion, race, language, ability/disability, sexuality, age or gender;
- This policy, having been developed with reference to the Human Rights Act and the Disability Acts <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>
- Will be reviewed if substantial changes occur so that it always sets out our commitment to tackling racial discrimination and promoting equality
- And good race relations, and explains what this means for the whole school community and
- This school will promote race equality and oppose racism in all its forms and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

Religion

- We acknowledge that members of the school come from diverse backgrounds, and we seek to promote an ethos of tolerance based on understanding of and respect for the beliefs and practices of others;
- With regard to the teaching of RE, we will demonstrate we consider the role of the teacher is that of educator and not that of evangelist. We seek to make our students aware of their faith and respect the faith of others as men of compassion, conscience, competence and commitment.

Vulnerable groups

- All students have equal access to activities, opportunities and services offered at Church Stretton School as appropriate and teaching and associate staff are aware of how vulnerability (e.g. A looked after child) may influence their expectations and attitudes and should therefore adjust their behaviour accordingly.

Key actions in promoting equality

The ethos of the school

- This policy reflects the ethos of the school and is linked to all the school’s policies;
- Steps are taken to ensure that everyone associated with the school is kept informed about this equality policy and abides by it and the policies and procedures are regularly reviewed.

Student's attainment and progress

- Students' attainment and progress in individual subjects is monitored by groups e.g. ethnicity, gender, SEND.
- The school develops strategies for tackling differences in the attainment and progress of groups;
- The school values the achievements and progress of students from all groups;
- All students have equal access to extra-curricular activities;
- Students are offered the support and guidance they need;
- Staff challenge racism and stereotyping and promote racial and gender equality in education, employment, training and career choice and
- Liaison takes place with providers to strive to ensure that students on work experience are not subjected to racism or sexual/racial harassment.

Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs)

- This school promotes an inclusive curriculum which celebrates the diverse nature of our society;
- Diversity is promoted and racism and discrimination challenged;
- Curriculum planning takes account of the needs of all students;
- Subject leaders provide guidance and examples of good practice for colleagues;
- The school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness in providing an appropriate curriculum for all students;
- The allocation of students to teaching groups and optional subjects is fair and equitable to students from all groups;
- Assessment outcomes are used to identify the specific needs of all students and to inform policies, planning and the allocation of resources;
- Teaching methods and styles take account of the needs of students from different ethnic groups and of students with SEN and encourage positive attitudes to ethnic differences, cultural diversity and racial equality and.
- The school takes active steps to ensure that resources in all areas of the curriculum are inclusive.

Students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Church Stretton School is committed to providing access to a first class education for all its students. The school recognises and values multilingualism. The language and learning needs of ethnic minority students are identified and appropriate support used. While the linguistic diversity of our students is highly valued, the school recognises that some students will require specific support in order to become fully bilingual and to develop high levels of proficiency in English to enable success and progress at school.

Parents, governors and community partnership

- Parents are welcome and respected in school;
- People from minority ethnic communities are able to become school Governors;

- Governors play an active role in the life of the school in order to fulfil their monitoring duties;
- The school seeks to support all Governors in performing their role, for example, through induction procedures for new Governors and robust training;
- All parents are regularly informed of their child's progress and steps are taken to involve minority ethnic parents in the life of the school.

Pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusion

- The school's procedures for managing behaviour and disciplining students are fair and applied equally to all students, irrespective of ethnicity;
- The process of excluding a pupil is fair and equitable to all students and strategies to reintegrate long-term truants and excluded students address the needs of students from all ethnic groups.

Racism and racial harassment

- There are established procedures for dealing with and recording incidents of racism and racial harassment which are understood by everyone in the school community.

Admissions and transfer procedures

- This school will take active steps to ensure that the admission process is fair and equitable to students from all groups;
- The school monitors students' attendance for all groups and uses the data to develop strategies to address poor attendance and provision is made for students to take time off for religious observance, through leave of absence and authorised absence.

Staff recruitment and career development

- Applications from all ethnic groups are welcomed at all levels in school however the recruitment and selection process ensures that discrimination is not taking place when new appointments or promotions are being considered;
- The school monitors the employment and professional development of staff by ethnicity;
- Proactive steps are taken to identify, support and provide opportunities for the professional development of staff from all ethnic groups and the school strives to ensure that redundancy policies avoid any form of discrimination.

Equal Opportunities Employer

The Headteacher should ensure that in recruitment procedures any advertisements, short listing and interview procedures are without any hint of direct or indirect discrimination. In staff appointments the best candidate will be appointed based upon strict professional criteria as laid down in the job description. During employment it would be unlawful to discriminate in the way opportunities for promotion, transfer or training were offered. It is also unlawful to discriminate in dismissals, particularly in redundancy dismissals.

Church Stretton School is committed to providing equal opportunities in recruitment, employment and the workplace and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in all related practices.

Under the Equality Act 2010, there are certain '**protected characteristics**' that qualify for protection against discrimination. These are **age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.**

Unlawful discrimination can take a number of forms:

Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic they have, or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (also see below).

Indirect discrimination applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership. It occurs where a rule, provision, criterion or practice is applied to everyone but has the effect of particularly disadvantaging people who share a protected characteristic. However, such indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown that the employer acted reasonably in managing the business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

Perceptive Discrimination applying to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, is direct discrimination against an individual due to the fact that others think, or perceive, that they possess a particular protected characteristic.

Associative Discrimination applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. It is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual." Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Employees/workers can complain about behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic him/herself. Employees and workers are also protected from harassment because of perception and association (see above).

Victimisation occurs when an employee/worker is badly treated because s/he has made or supported a complaint, or raised a grievance, or is suspected of doing so. However, s/he is not protected from victimisation if the complaint has been made or supported maliciously.

Pregnancy and maternity provisions afford protection against discrimination to women during the period of the pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave. During this period, pregnancy and maternity discrimination cannot be treated as sex discrimination.

Everyone is required to assist in meeting the commitment to providing equal opportunities and avoiding unlawful discrimination. Employees and workers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the employer for acts of unlawful discrimination. Anyone who commits a serious act of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary matters and will be dealt with accordingly. Such acts may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Roles and responsibilities

Whole school

Every Governor and employee is responsible for upholding and promoting the school Code of Conduct and for promoting equality and raising the achievement of all students (including, for instance, those from minority ethnic groups).

Headteacher

The Headteacher will demonstrate through personal leadership the importance of this policy ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy and understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to it. The Headteacher will monitor the impact of this policy.

Heads of Department/Subject Leaders

Heads of Departments or the nominated subject leaders will be responsible for reviewing and monitoring curriculum policies and planning in their own subject areas to ensure that equality is being promoted.

Teachers

Teachers will familiarise themselves with this policy and know that their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented. They will know the implications of the policy for their planning, teaching and learning strategies as well as for behavioural issues.

Non-Teaching Staff

Non-teaching staff will be issued with this policy by the relevant Head of Department/Line Manager who appointed them and will familiarise themselves with it so they know what their responsibility is to ensure that the policy is implemented.

Students

Students will be made aware of how the policy applies to them. They will learn to treat each other with respect and report incidents of discrimination to an appropriate adult.

Awareness of Policy

Parents and students should know that the school has an equality and diversity policy and is committed to equality of opportunity for all students. Church Stretton School Governing body actively promotes and implements equal opportunities. The Governors agree that transparency in dealing with staff issues will allow colleagues to feel comfortable with the outcomes.

Monitoring

Monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the equality and diversity policy and race equality policy is undertaken in the following ways:

- All reports of racism are logged in the Hate Crime register;
- Student achievement is analysed in terms of disability, ethnicity, gender, eligibility for Free school Meals and Looked After Children;
- Recruitment processes are monitored in terms of recording ethnicity, details about applicants and appointments through the 'Equal Opportunities' section of the application form and recruitment recording forms and overall performance against the policy is assessed through the school's self-evaluation procedures.

Complaints Procedure

If any member of staff in the school feels that this policy is not being followed, then they should raise the matter with their personal line manager and if necessary the Headteacher. If any parent feels that this policy is not being followed, then they should raise the matter with their son/daughter's Form Tutor and if necessary the Line Manager. If any visitor feels that this policy is not being followed, then they should raise the matter the person who invited them or the school office. If there is a formal complaint, then the school's Complaints Procedure will be used.