

St. Winefride's Catholic Primary School



Single Equality Policy including Curriculum Statement; Community Cohesion; Gender, Race and Disability Equality Matters; Staff Selection and Recruitment

Mission Statement

*To provide excellence in all aspects of school life,
embedded in the values and beliefs of the Catholic faith.*

Vision Statement

*To be an outstanding school where every member reaches
their true potential and knows the joy of a
personal relationship with Jesus Christ.*

Date of issue	Review date	Date ratified by Governing Body
14 November 2012	January 2017	11 th February 2015

ST. WINEFRIDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

WHAT WE MEAN BY EQUALITY

At the heart of Catholic education is the Christian vision of the human person. We at St Winefride's School believe that the human individual is created '*in the image of God*' (*Genesis 1: 27*) and that '*being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something but someone*' (CCC. 357). '*We believe each person possesses a basic dignity that comes from God*' and from Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became one of us (*John 1: 14*) '*and not from any human quality or accomplishment, not from race, or gender, age or economic status*' (The Common Good in Education, Catholic Education Service, p. 6, 1997).

This Christian vision, derived from Christ, his Church and Scripture, is expressed and explored in the Catholic life of our school and understood as a '*work of love*' (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, §15). Through Christ's command to '*love one another as I have loved you*' (*John 15: 12*) we understand equality to mean treating everyone with equal dignity and worth valuing their particular characteristics such as their age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio-economic circumstances.

In his teachings and actions, Christ focused on the poor and vulnerable in society and purposely included in his ministry those who were excluded by prejudice and discrimination. Following Christ's example we further understand that people have different needs, situations and goals and therefore achieving equality requires the removal of discriminatory barriers that limit what people, especially children and young people can do and can be. We recognise that inequality can be experienced in a variety of ways such as through outcomes, access to services, the degree of independence to make decisions affecting lives and inequality of treatment, including in relation to employment, through direct and indirect discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions or systems intentionally or inadvertently.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In fulfilling the legal obligations outlined further on in this scheme, we at St Winefride's School are guided by seven principles which are underwritten by the theological foundations outlined above.

Principle 1: all members of the school and wider community are of equal value

We see all members of the school and wider community of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or socio-economic circumstances
- whichever their gender and sexual orientation
- whatever their age

Principle 2: we recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences in life-experience, outlook and

background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender and sexual orientation so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised.
- age

Principle 3: we foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or socio-economic circumstances, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment
- positive intergenerational attitudes and relationships.

Principle 4: we will ensure that the recruitment, retention and ongoing development of staff is undertaken in a fair and equitable manner to support our school's vision and values

'The Catholic Church has always deplored the treatment of employment as nothing more than a form of commercial contract. This leads to a sense of alienation between the worker and his or her labour ... Work is more than just a way of making a living: it is a vocation, a participation in God's creative activity. When properly organised and respectful of the humanity of the worker, it is also a source of fulfillment and satisfaction.' (The Common Good in Education, Catholic Education Service, p. 18, 1997)

We intend that our policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, *religious affiliation*,* national origin or socio-economic circumstance
- whichever their gender and sexual orientation
- whatever their age

*Employment: the Equality Act 2010 provides that for schools with a religious character it will not be unlawful discrimination to do things permitted by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The existing exemptions as they relate to schools with a religious character are therefore retained. This means for Catholic schools that, in common with other voluntary aided schools with a religious character, they may give preference in connection

with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of teachers at the school, to those whose religious beliefs or religious practice is in accordance with the tenets of their denomination, i.e. the Roman Catholic faith. Likewise they may give similar preference to those who give or who are willing to give religious education at the school in accordance with the tenets of the Catholic Church.

Conduct of a teacher which is incompatible with the precepts of the Church, or which fails to uphold its tenets, may be taken into consideration in determining whether the teacher's employment should be terminated. In addition, the governing body of a voluntary aided school, (like other schools with a religious character) has the power to dismiss an RE teacher, without the consent of the local authority, on the grounds that s/he fails to give religious education efficiently and suitably.

Preference can therefore be given to practising Catholics in appointments to teaching posts and this has also been extended to allow preference to be given to practising Catholics in non-teaching posts where there is a genuine Occupational Requirement. This latter point in relation to support staff is set out in Schedule 9(3) of the Equality Act 2010 which states that 'where the employer has an ethos based on religion or belief they do not contravene the Act by applying a requirement to be of a particular religion or belief if having regard to the nature of the work it is an occupational requirement and is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.' This right was termed a 'genuine occupational requirement' in previous guidance see Diversity and Equality Guidelines, Appendix II, p. 16, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, 2005.

At St Winefride's School it is an occupational requirement that the most senior roles i.e. the posts of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, RE Co-ordinator, be filled by a baptised and practising Catholic in good standing with the Church.

Principle 5: we aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious and socio-economic backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men
- people of different sexual orientation
- people whatever their age (where appropriate)

Principle 6: we consult widely

Where possible we involve a wide range of people in the consultation, design and review of policies including:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious and socio-economic backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.
- people of different sexual orientation

- people from different age groups

Principle 7: the community as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious and socio-economic backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys.
- people of different sexual orientation
- people of different ages and between generations

ST WINEFRIDE'S PRACTICE IN THE LIGHT OF OUR STATED PRINCIPLES

ACTION PLANS

We use our annual School Improvement Plan review process to identify practical priorities and plans of specific action, in order to promote equality in:

- disability
- ethnicity
- gender
- sexual orientation*
- religion and belief
- age
- socio-economic circumstances

**The Catholic community includes people of heterosexual, homosexual and bi-sexual orientation. Every human being, whatever his or her sexual orientation, has the right to live a life free from discrimination and harassment ... Moreover, people of all sexual orientations have a right to take a full and active part in the life of the Catholic community. Catholic teaching, of course, makes a distinction between sexual orientation and sexual activity, and it holds that all men and women are called to a life of chastity, and to fidelity if they choose to marry. Catholic organisations and institutions ask their members and staff to respect this teaching.' (Diversity and Equality Guidelines, paragraphs 28-29, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, 2005)*

1. We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy are what make a difference.
2. Each year as part of the SIP process we review the aspects covered by this policy and, if needed, we draw up an action plan within the framework of the overall school improvement plan, setting out the specific actions and projects we shall undertake to implement the principles above.
3. Any current actions are set out in our School Improvement Plan.

THE CURRICULUM

4. We actively seek opportunities to review the curriculum (including the hidden curriculum) in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles outlined above.*

*Curriculum: the content of the curriculum is excluded from discrimination law following the Equality Act 2010. The Act does, however, explicitly include the delivery of the curriculum i.e. the way in which education is provided. Schools will need to ensure that the way in which issues are taught does not subject individual pupils to discrimination. Catholic schools can, as before, teach in line with their religious ethos and 'provided that their beliefs are explained in an appropriate way in an educational context that takes into account existing guidance on the delivery of Sex and Relationship Education and Religious Education then schools should not be acting unlawfully. Further that it would not be unlawful for a teacher in any school to express personal views on sexual orientation provided that it is done in an appropriate manner and context.' (draft guidance from the DfE cited in Equality Act 2010, Guidance Note, CES, July 2011).

General Statement of Educational Policy

The Governors have responsibility for the curriculum and general conduct of the school. Being a Catholic school we have a particular awareness that the whole curriculum has a spiritual dimension and St Winefride's is committed to the aims, values and teachings of the Catholic Faith, whilst at the same time being sensitive and supportive to the needs of children of other faiths who have been admitted. Much of the curriculum is concerned with the provision of opportunities in a wide range of areas of learning for the development of each individual's potential, value and self-worth. It is the Governors' policy that pupils will be treated on their individual merits without regard to sex, race, or disability in accordance with Gospel values and with the relevant legislative provisions. The Governors shall, however, in matters pertaining to the curriculum and conduct of the school, be under no obligation to go beyond the strict legislative requirements, and in particular, shall not be obliged to introduce into the curriculum or into the school any subject or practice which is contrary to the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

Provision of Educational Facilities and the Curriculum:

In the classroom teachers will:

- Seek to organise the children to work together regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender or disability so that they are less likely to develop stereotyped attitudes. Children will be encouraged to line up in mixed pairs. The lining up of boys and girls separately will be avoided. The register and class lists will be kept in alphabetic order.
- Ensure that areas in the classroom and playground do not become predominantly the domain of one particular group of children e.g. home corner or construction area.
- Ensure that children are not singled out because of their ethnic origin. Names, whatever their ethnic origin, will be pronounced correctly and children with less usual or complicated names, will not be made the subject of humour, name calling or unwelcome attention.
- Enable children with physical or mental disability, or statemented children to achieve their potential and ensure that these children are treated by all staff and pupils with the special care and respect that is due to them.
- Use teaching aids when appropriate to challenge sexist assumptions, practices and stereotypes, providing positive alternatives.
- Challenge children's language where it reflects sexist stereotyping. The child will be asked to explain what he/she means and be encouraged to reflect on it.

- Use drama and role-play as techniques to enable the children to empathise with the experience of others.
- Take care to avoid the use of sexist language and statements.
- Endeavour to develop their awareness of how they divide their time between boys and girls and ensure equal attention is given to both.

All children will have the opportunity:

- To participate fully in the curriculum without assumptions being made about the suitability of any activity for boys and girls.
- To gain self-worth and self-confidence.
- For equal educational experiences so that later they can make choices from a base of common skills and knowledge.
- To work with equipment, books and materials which do not present men and women in stereotyped roles and to have equal access to resources such as computers, books, technology, equipment and playground space.
- To work and play in an environment in which wall displays show positive, non-discriminatory role models, people of different race or ethnic origin and disabled people.
- To participate in a curriculum, the factual content of which is underpinned by attitudes and values which are consistent with the Catholic vision of individuals, of relationships and of society as a whole.

In school Organisation and Management the school will:

- Promote an environment in which all staff, pupils, governors and visitors to the school are conscious of the sanctity of human life and the dignity that should be afforded to God's creation in all its manifestations.
- Avoid unnecessary separation of the sexes, races or persons with disability, unless a specific educational purpose is being met.
- Ensure that staff roles are not limited to one sex.
- Provide an opportunity for children to see men and women in a wide variety of work roles and roles associated with the home.
- Ensure that the discipline/behaviour policy, and its application, is the same for both boys and girls.
- Ensure, where reasonably possible, that extra-curricular activities are available to all children and timed so to avoid stereotyped assumptions or choices.
- Ensure that married staff are not disadvantaged by their status e.g. by assuming that married women would not be seeking promotion. Consideration should be given wherever possible to the fact that men and women have family and home responsibilities. As a Catholic school we not only ensure compliance with the law in this respect but acknowledge the sanctity of marriage as a Sacrament and affirm the desirability of presenting appropriate role models to children at our school, in the home and in the life of the parish.
- Ensure that children whose parents are separated or divorced or are of single parents are not disadvantaged at school or alienated by the fact that their parents do not follow the Christian ideal of a mother and father, married to each other, providing a loving, stable and secure home.
- Ensure that any physical changes to the building take into account the needs of the disabled and that resources, wherever possible, are made available for the improvement of access to the school and its use by the disabled. The Governors will carry out an annual audit of facilities for the disabled.
- Ensure that all members of staff are seen as parts of an inclusive corporate body in which all staff views will be listened to and through which all will be offered the opportunity to be involved fully in the life of the school and the social life of the staff.

ETHOS AND ORGANISATION

5. We ensure that the principles listed above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
 - learners' and staff personal development, welfare and well-being
 - teaching styles and strategies
 - admissions and attendance*
 - staff and governor recruitment, retention and professional development
 - care, guidance and support
 - behaviour, discipline and exclusions
 - working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
 - working with the wider community.
 - Participation of groups in wider school activities
 - Preparing all members of the learning community for living and positively contributing to a diverse society

*Admissions: under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, St Winefride's will continue to give priority to Catholics where the school is oversubscribed in accordance with the provisions of the School Admission Code.

THE RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

Application of the Policy

This section applies to all staff, and reference to 'person' includes any individual or employee whether full or part time or in temporary employment who acts on behalf of the school in the course of his or her duties.

Suitability for Employment

In the application of this policy, it is essential that persons responsible for appointments, when short listing or interviewing applicants, should seek to appoint the most suitable person for the position and during this process not discriminate either directly, or indirectly in matters of sex, marriage, disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin or nationality.

Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination which means treating one candidate less favourably than another for reasons of race, sex or disability will be avoided.

Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination which occurs when the same conditions are imposed on everyone, but the conditions themselves are of such a nature that they have a disproportionately adverse effect on one sex rather than the other, or one race or ethnic group rather than another, and where the conditions themselves cannot be objectively justified, will be avoided. However, the concept of indirect discrimination does not apply to disability discrimination.

Examples of Discrimination

Examples of discrimination in a school context are:

- An assumption that certain types of work are suitable only for members of one sex (e.g. cleaner, site manager, mid-day supervisor or headteacher).
- A refusal to consider male applicants who wear beards for cultural or religious reasons.
- An assumption that qualifications obtained outside the UK, but recognised by the Department for Education and Employment, are of less value than those obtainable with the UK.
- An assumption that persons from certain nationalities/cultures are more likely to be lazy.
- An assumption that a married woman teacher would be less committed to the job than a single woman.

Such types of discrimination are unacceptable.

Employment of Catholic Teachers

The Governors have statutory obligations to secure, preserve and develop that character of the school as a Catholic Voluntary Aided School and to conduct the school in accordance with the Trust Deed. Although governors must at all times show due regard and sensitivity for the privacy of staff, the Governing Body is nonetheless entitled to satisfy itself that the lifestyle of Catholic employees is in keeping with the beliefs and moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

Recruitment and Promotion

Applicants for vacancies shall be given information about posts through advertisements or communicated via job details or interviews in order to enable them to assess their own suitability for the post. Information about posts shall be prominently displayed to ensure the full implementation of this policy.

Vacancies shall be advertised internally within the school to attract staff who are likely to possess appropriate qualifications or have relevant experience. External advertisements and recruitment drives will be on a sufficiently wide basis to attract suitably qualified and experienced candidates and will be placed in the denominational press as well as the general media.

All applicants shall be informed that the school operates an Equal Opportunities Policy. Such information shall be conveyed on all post information details.

All personnel specifications of posts shall include only requirements under headings of 'essential' and/or 'desirable' as shall be justifiable for the effective performance of the job. Requirements which are placed in personnel specifications which impose limitations on potential applicants must be assessed for discrimination.

Against the background of this guidance, persons making appointments shall conduct interviews on an objective basis and will deal only with the applicant's suitability for the job and ability to fulfil the job requirements. Questions directed exclusively and in isolation at domestic commitments are not justifiable.

Genuine Occupational Qualifications

Should the Governors seek to appoint on the basis of Genuine Occupational Qualifications they will first obtain advice from the Diocesan Officers and Bradford LA HR Department.

Positive Action

Whilst the school intends that recruitment, transfer/re-deployment and promotion will be on merit and devoid of discrimination, the legislation allows limited action to be taken by

employers to redress the effects of previous unequal opportunity. The employer's action applies where there have been few or no members of a particular sex or race in a category of their employment for the previous twelve months. Even in these circumstances, positive discrimination will not be applied in the actual filling of job vacancies.

Special Provisions relating to Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it illegal to discriminate against disabled job applicants or employees on the basis of their disability.

Under Section 29 of the Act Governors will publish the following information for parents and visitors:

- the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils
- the steps taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils
- the facilities provided to assist access to the school by disabled pupils

ADDRESSING PREJUDICE AND PREJUDICE-RELATED BULLYING

6. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling legal duties for all aspects of equality:
 - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
 - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
7. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with in line with existing and future legal requirements.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8. The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with current legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.
9. A dedicated member (the Chair of Governors) has a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy.
10. The head teacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff, governors and visitors are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.
11. A Senior Leader has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
12. All staff are expected to:
 - promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom

- challenge and deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- ensure pupils have the opportunity to have their voices heard with regards to equality issues

COMMUNITY COHESION

'An insight of Christian faith in the Trinity is the knowledge that the desire to belong to human society is God-given. Human beings are made in the image of God, and within the one God is a divine society of three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Communities are brought into being by the participation of individual men and women, responding to this divine impulse towards social relationships – essentially, the impulse to love and to be loved – which was implanted by the God who created them.' (The Common Good in Education, p.6, 1997)

'Christ taught us that our neighbourhood is universal: so loving our neighbour has global', as well as local and regional, 'dimensions... Christ challenges us to see his presence in our neighbour, especially the neighbour who suffers or who lacks what is essential to human flourishing... In meeting our neighbour's needs, we are also serving Christ. For the Christian, therefore, there can be no higher privilege and duty'. The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching, Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, paragraphs 12 & 14, 1996.

Consequently, for the Catholic community, striving for a cohesive society is essential to human flourishing. Since September 2007 all schools have had a duty to contribute to 'working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the work place, in schools and in the wider community' (Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion, Department for Children, Schools & Families, 2007).

We at St Winefride's Catholic Primary School, in light of our Catholic life and character and the insights gained from Catholic social teaching, make this contribution by creating opportunities, through the curriculum and otherwise, for pupils to interact with those from different backgrounds to themselves to enrich their understanding of community and diversity.

We recognise that a school's community is defined through 4 dimensions:

- the school community,
- the community within which the school is located,
- the UK community,
- the global community.

We at St Winefride's Catholic Primary School understand that there are links between the duty to promote community cohesion and the duty to promote equality through the interplay of *subsidiarity* and *solidarity*, although each has a distinctive focus. Through subsidiarity equality can be increased when people at every level of an organisation are given power to make decisions. *'Solidarity means the willingness to see others as another self, and so to*

regard injustice committed against another as no less serious than an injustice against oneself (The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching, paragraph 22 & 23).

We recognise and accept that our school's contribution to community cohesion should be organised under three main headings:

1. Teaching, learning and curriculum

- helping children and young people to learn to understand others
- to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values
- to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them
- to develop the skills of participation and responsible action

2. Equity and excellence

- a. to ensure equal opportunities for all to succeed at the highest level possible
- b. striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities
- c. working to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups

3. Engagement and extended services

- to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds
- build positive relationships
- receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

13. This policy is displayed on our school website in order to We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents and carers.
14. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

15. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

Governors accept their legal responsibilities towards parents with regard to collective worship. However they expect that all parents will fully understand the implications of the place of worship in a Catholic school before seeking a place for their child.

The character and content of collective worship in St Winefride's is in accordance with the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church. All children currently attend Holy Mass which is said in school each week and the school celebrates the feast days and religious festivals of the Catholic Church throughout the year.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

16. We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff and governors, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

BREACHES OF THE POLICY

17. Breaches of this scheme will be dealt with in the same ways that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the head teacher and governing body.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We collect study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate. In particular we collect, analyse and use data relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin, socio-economic circumstances, gender and age. To review good practice we make use of a range of auditing schedules. We will use the information gained from our involvement with all stakeholders and issues arising from our data (qualitative and quantitative) to prioritise activities for improvement. This will be done on an annual basis as part of our School Improvement planning process.