



St Mary's Church of England V.A. Primary School
Equal Opportunities Policy
(Including Race Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme)



This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies of the school:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Differentiation Policy
- Displays Policy
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Accessibility Plan
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Gifted and Talented and Exceptionally Able Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PSHCE Policy
- Spirituality Policy
- Collective Worship Policy

At St. Mary's School the staff and Governors are committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity applies to the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters. Each pupil:

- Must be, and stay, safe
- Must be healthy
- Must be able to enjoy and achieve
- Must be able to achieve economic well-being
- Must make a positive contribution

In the context of the school we feel the most appropriate definition is that:

Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, and each individual is respected for who they are.

Introduction

This policy statement outlines the commitment of the staff and Governors of St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
 - Teaching staff
 - Support staff
 - Parents
 - Governors
 - Visitors to the school
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- Students on placement.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life, and is the responsibility of every member of the school community.

This policy statement reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of discussion with representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, governors and pupil representatives.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community. The responsibility for keeping the issue of equal opportunity at a high level of priority at all times and in all areas, is that of the Governors curriculum committee and Senior Leadership Team.

All members of the school community should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value and be given equal opportunities regardless of:

- Ethnicity
- Gender (including Transgender)
- Social background
- Ability/Disability
- HIV/AIDS
- Belief
- Age
- Marital status
- Nationality/Citizenship
- Sexual orientation.

Who is responsible?

The Governors are responsible for:

- making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation,
- ensuring that the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed.

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- making sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed;
- making sure the race, disability and gender equality plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them via the school website and reference to the plans in the school newsletter at the start of each academic year;
- ensuring there is regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;
- ensuring all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out;
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying and bullying related to gender or disability.

All staff are responsible for:

- dealing with racist, homophobic and other hate-incidents;
 - being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
 - promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
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- avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of ethnicity, disability or gender
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination;
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

School Ethos and Atmosphere

At St. Mary's Church of England VA Primary School we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community. We strive to create an ethos and atmosphere where everyone feels welcome to the school. The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.

The displays around the school are of high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.

Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the pupils according to the Collective Worship and Spirituality policies.

Learning Environment; The taught Curriculum; Organisation of Learning; Resources and Materials.

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

In line with our school's Teaching and Learning Policy, the learning environment, taught curriculum, learning organisation and resources reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity. The adults in the school provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.

At St. Mary's school our environment is not diverse, and we are very conscious of the need to provide first hand experiences for the pupils to encounter people from other cultures. We do this through the presented curriculum and the multi-cultural links the school has with schools in France, Romania and Kenya.

Language

We recognise that it is important at St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School that all members of the school community use appropriate language which:

- does not transmit or confirm stereotypes
 - does not offend
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- creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document
- creates the conditions for all people to develop their self esteem
- uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals e.g. Inuit rather than Eskimo, Native Americans rather than Red Indians.

Extra-curricular provision

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. volunteers, visitors).

We ensure that all such non staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines through providing them with a copy of the Equal Opportunity policy and discussing the policy at their induction.

Provision for Bilingual pupils

We undertake at St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School to make appropriate provision for all bilingual groups to aid access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveller children
- those from refugee families
- pupils whose home language is not a standard form of English
- pupils for whom English is an additional language.

While there is a need for pupils to learn to communicate in standard English we believe that their home language should be celebrated and respected.

Where appropriate we call upon the support of the E2L team to support individual pupils or to support staff in providing for the needs of those pupils.

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This includes pupils' access to male and female staff.

We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals.

It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.

- unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)
- unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender (or transgender)

The school has a clear, agreed procedure for dealing with incidents such as these (see Behaviour Policy and also Gloucestershire document on Racial Harassment in Education – Good Practice Guide for Schools).

Parents and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential

We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to other diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond.

Monitoring and Review

Equality of opportunity is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring in the School Development Plan.

The person on the staff responsible for co-ordinating the monitoring and evaluation of the policy is the head teacher with support from the Multicultural Co-ordinator.

S/he will be responsible for:

- Leading discussions in designated staff meetings which will include support staff, to discuss issues of equal opportunities within the school community.
- Working closely with the Governors curriculum committee who are responsible for this area.
- Monitoring the following will enable the school to see where equality of opportunity needs to be more intensely focused:

SATs results

participation in extra-curricular activities

exclusions and truancy

continuous assessment of children's learning

racist and sexist incidents

results from screening for specific learning needs attendance.

Legislation

We are bound by the legal requirements of the following legislation:

The Sex Discrimination Act 1995

Human Rights Act 1998

Civil Partnership Act 2004

Gender Recognition Act 2004

[The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000](#)

[The Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#)

[The Disability Discrimination Act \(Amendment\) Regulations 2003](#)

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001

[The Disability \(Pensions\) Regulations 2003](#)

[The Disability Rights Commission Act 1999](#)

[The Education \(Modification of Enactments Relating to Employment\) Order 2003](#): SI 2003/1964

[The Education Act 1996: Part IV](#)

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006:

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

[The Employment Equality \(Religion or Belief\) Regulations 2003](#): SI 2003/1660

[The Employment Equality \(Sexual Orientation\) Regulations 2003](#): SI 2003/1661

The Equality Act 2006

Policy Review

This Equal Opportunities Policy shall be reviewed annually by Curriculum Committee, with any recommended changes approved by the full Governing Body.

The next review is due on, or prior to, 31st March 2012.

Signed:

Date: March 2011
