



## Church Valley Schools Federation Equalities Policy

### **Rationale**

In Church Valley Schools Federation, we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We do this by taking account of pupils' varied experiences and needs. We offer a broad and balanced curriculum, and have high expectations of all children. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children matter. This policy is intended to help ensure that this school promotes the individuality of all children, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

This policy accords with the following legislation:

### **Equalities Act 2012**

The Act makes it unlawful for the responsible body of a school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil:

- in relation to admissions,
- in the way it provides education for pupils,
- in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service, or
- by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The "responsible body" is the governing body or any persons acting on behalf of the responsible body – including employees of the school. They are liable for their own discriminatory actions, and the responsible body is also liable unless it can show that it has taken all reasonable steps to stop the individual from doing the discriminatory action or from doing anything of that kind.

The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their pupils and prospective pupils: the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. It does not therefore bear directly on such issues as racist or homophobic bullying by pupils. However, if a school treats bullying which relates to a protected ground less seriously than other forms of bullying – for example dismissing complaints of homophobic bullying or failing to protect a transgender pupil against bullying by classmates – then it may be guilty of unlawful discrimination.

It is unlawful for a school to discriminate against a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity



It is also unlawful to discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the pupil is associated.

### **Unlawful Behaviour**

The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour – direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

**Direct discrimination** occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat – or would treat – other people. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic.

**Harassment** is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”.

Where we are concerned, the offence of harassment only to harassment because of disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity, and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It is very important to recognise that this does not mean that we are free to bully or harass pupils on these other grounds - to do so would still be unlawful as well as unacceptable. Any case against the school would be on grounds of direct discrimination rather than harassment.

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done.

### **Aims**

- To promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through the education that we provide in school.
- To ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities that we provide.
- To remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups.
- To ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone.
- To challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur.
- To value the worth of each pupil, we celebrate their individuality and cultural diversity, as well as showing respect for all minority groups.

### **Teaching and Learning**

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- Use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- Monitor achievement data by ethnicity, gender and disability and action any gaps;
- Take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;



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- Ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- Use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of race, gender and disability, without stereotyping;
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- Encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- Including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils.

### **Admissions and exclusions**

We follow Local Authority guidelines on admissions, which are fair to all groups.

Exclusions will always be based on the school's Behaviour Policy. We will closely monitor exclusions to avoid any potential adverse impact and ensure any discrepancies are identified and dealt with.

### **Environment**

We will ensure that the school environment reflects our commitment to a policy of equality for all. Displays reflect a positive image of race, religion, belief, gender, physical ability and special need.

### **Resources**

Current resources and new acquisitions will be monitored to ensure the promotion of equal opportunity and to ensure full access to the National Curriculum for all children.

### **Staff**

Every member of staff has a valued contribution to make to the life of this school. It is recognised that the professional development of all staff is supported wherever possible. All staff are aware of the dangers of allowing stereotypes to influence their expectations of pupils and therefore ensure that all pupils are offered equal opportunities.

### **Race Equality**

The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

The school will have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.



## **Disability**

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy.

### **Definition of disability**

The Equalities Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' Some specified medical conditions, HIV, multiple sclerosis and cancer are all considered as disabilities, regardless of their effect.

Long term is defined as lasting, or likely to last, for at least 12 months.

**Direct Discrimination:** A school must not treat a disabled pupil less favourably simply because that pupil is disabled. If a school discriminates against a person purely because of his or her disability (even if they are trying to achieve a legitimate aim) then it would be unlawful discrimination as there can be no justification for their actions.

**Indirect Discrimination:** A school must not do something which applies to all pupils but which is more likely to have an adverse effect on disabled pupils only.

**Discrimination arising from disability:** A school must not discriminate against a disabled pupil because of something that is a consequence of their disability.

**Harassment:** A school must not harass a pupil because of his or her disability.

**Disability Equality Duty:** Schools previously had a statutory duty which required them to take proactive steps to tackle disability discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity for disabled pupils. Under the Equality Act, this has been replaced by the general equality duty and the new specific duties.

### Reasonable Adjustments

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies only to disabled people. This is summarised as follows:

- Where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage compared to other pupils then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage.
- Schools will be expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils.
- Schools are not subject to the other reasonable adjustment duty to make alterations to physical features because this is already considered as part of their planning duties.

We will:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminate discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation in public life by disabled people;
- Take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.



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### **Accessibility Plan**

The school will implement an accessibility plan which is aimed at:

- increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- improving the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of facilities; and
- improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

### **Gender Equality**

Church Valley Schools Federation will ensure that it eliminates unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of gender and to promote equality of opportunity between female and male pupils and between women and men and transgender people.



Under our general duty we will actively seek to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of sex and gender reassignment;
- Promote equality between men and women.

Under our specific duty we will:

- Prepare and publish an Equality Plan which covers the requirements for a Disability, Race and Gender Equality Scheme identifying our equality goals and actions to meet them;
- Review and revise this Scheme every three years.

### **Sexual Orientation**

We will ensure that all gay, lesbian or bi-sexual pupils, or the children of gay, lesbian or bi-sexual parents, are not singled out for different and less favourable treatment from that given to other pupils.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The role of the Governing Body:**

- The governing body is committed to equal opportunities and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on race, gender and disability.
- The governing body seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school on grounds of race, gender or disability.
- The governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make school communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils.
- The governors welcome all applications to join the school, whatever a child's socio-economic background, race, gender or disability.
- The governing body ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school on account of their race, sex or disability.

#### **The role of the Headteacher:**

- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure equality and is supported by the governing body in doing so.
- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure that all staff are aware of the Equality Act and that teachers apply these guidelines fairly in all situations.
- The Headteacher ensures that all appointments panels give due regard to equality, so that no-one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities.
- The Headteacher promotes the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promotes respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher treats all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, with due seriousness.

#### **The role of all staff:**

- All staff will ensure that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the Equality act
- All staff will strive to provide material that gives positive images based on race, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypical images.



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- All staff will challenge any incidents of prejudice, racism or homophobia, and record any serious incidents, drawing them to the attention of the Headteacher.
- Teachers support the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

### **Pupils will:**

- have a responsibility to themselves and others to treat each other with respect, to feel valued and to speak out if they witness or are subject to any inappropriate language or behaviour.

### **Tackling discrimination**

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and is not tolerated within our school.

All staff are expected to deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur. They are expected to know how to identify and challenge prejudice and stereotyping; and to support the full range of diverse needs according to a pupil's individual circumstances.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of harassment or bullying are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to a class teacher / Headteacher where necessary. All incidents are reported to the Headteacher and racist incidents are reported to the governing body and local authority on a termly basis.

### **Types of discriminatory incident**

Types of discriminatory incidents that can occur are:

- Physical assault against a person or group because of their colour, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation or gender;
- Use of derogatory names, insults and jokes;
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory graffiti;
- Provocative behaviour such as wearing racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory badges or insignia;
- Bringing discriminatory material into school;
- Verbal abuse and threats;
- Incitement of others to discriminate or bully due to victim's race, disability, gender or sexual orientation;
- Discriminatory comments in the course of discussion;
- Attempts to recruit others to discriminatory organisations and groups;
- Ridicule of an individual for difference e.g. food, music, religion, dress etc;
- Refusal to co-operate with other people on grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation.



### **Partnership with Parents, Carers, Governors and the Community**

- All parents/carers will be welcomed and actively encouraged to become involved with the school and to share with the school their background, culture and aspirations for their children
- All the school's forms of communication with and involvement of parents and carers are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all
- Community members of all groups are encouraged to participate in the life of the school

Date of Policy: February 2017

Review date: February 2019

Signed:

Head teacher