



Equality Policy Information and Objectives

Preparing children today for a new tomorrow; nurturing their dreams, hopes and aspirations within our Christian values and principles.

*“Teach a child to choose the right path and when he is older he will remain upon it.”
Proverbs 22:6*

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“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith”

Galatians 3:26

In July 2016 a fresh articulation of the Church of England’s vision for education was published. This document - Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good – articulates the fundamental reasons, rooted in the Bible, which have motivated centuries of Christian involvement in schooling in this country and around the world. The God of all creation is concerned with everything related to education. The vision is for the common good of the whole human community and its environment, whether national, regional or local. It is hospitable to diversity, respects freedom of religion and belief, and encourages others to contribute from the depths of their own traditions and understandings. It invites collaboration, alliances, negotiation of differences, and the forming of new settlements in order to serve the flourishing of a healthily plural society and democracy, together with a healthily plural educational system.

Whilst schools are not required to have an equality policy it may be wise as this area is likely to be inspected. This template outlines key areas to include in your policy. Primarily it seeks to demonstrate that as a Church of England school all the members of the school community are loved by God and all are encouraged to live out that love by welcoming and valuing each other. This will include being able to respect each other even when individuals may hold different points of view from each other. As a Christian school we aim to love and serve God first and ourselves and others second (Matt. 22 vv37-40)

It is a requirement under the public sector Equality Duty (PSED) that schools draw up and publish equality objectives every four years and making it a statutory requirement to annually publish information demonstrating how they are meeting the aims of the PSED.

Any equality and inclusion policy and the requirements under the PSED should be available on the school website and hard copies should also be available.

St Thomas' is a two form entry Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary school serving a community in Blackburn East.

Learn, Enjoy, Achieve

Our School Mission Statement is:

Preparing children today for a new tomorrow; nurturing their dreams, hopes and aspirations within our Christian values and principles.

Our Vision is:

We will be a school which is both caring and nurturing, where everyone feels confident and valued and has the opportunity to experience God's loving care.

We will have a learning environment where children are encouraged to be respectful, responsible and independent and are given the necessary skills to succeed in life.

*We will encourage **EVERYONE** to go 'the extra mile' and only accept their best.*

School Statement on equality

In line with the Diocesan Vision and Church of England Vision for Education, which specifically talks of the need to build community and promote dignity, this school seeks equality in all it does. Every person in our school community has been made in the image of God (Gen 1:27) and is loved unconditionally by God. Everyone is equal in the sight of God and therefore we seek to love one another as Jesus loved others. Our school is a place where we seek to serve others and all in their unique difference can able to thrive.

We are committed to promoting the understanding of the principles and practices of equality – treating all members of our school community as individuals, according to their needs, with an awareness of our diverse society and appreciating the value of difference. We actively seek to challenge discrimination and we promote an anti-bullying stance which makes clear the unacceptability of discrimination and draws on advice issued in the Valuing All God's Children report (Autumn 2017)

1. Legal framework

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to protected characteristics listed in the act.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

2. Guiding principles

Over Millennia Christian faith has pioneered equality as Jesus was radical in His welcome of all. So our approach to equality is based on the following key principles:

Everyone is equal, as we are known and loved by God unconditionally.

We see all members of our school community as equal and have due regard to the protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- marriage and civil partnership
- gender or gender identity
- religion or belief
- sexual identity
- pregnancy and maternity

We recognise and respect difference.

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to protected characteristics.

We observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development.

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development. We recognise that certain roles in school will have genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post holder to be a practising Christian and ensure effective assessments of each role are carried out to establish whether a GOR applies.

We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist.

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

Society as a whole should benefit.

We intend that our policies and activities should foster greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of those with protected characteristics.

Objectives

The school uses the School improvement planning process to set objectives for all aspects of school life. These objectives are set having due regard to this policy

3. Development of the policy

This policy is based on the model policy created by Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education

4. Links to other policies and documentation

We ensure that the principles listed above apply to all of our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' progress, attainment and achievement
- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- Teaching styles and strategies
- SMSC and PSHE
- Admissions and attendance
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Care, guidance and support
- Special educational needs
- Behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- Bullying and addressing prejudice related bullying
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- Working with the wider community

We also ensure that information about our responsibilities under the Equality Act are included in our school development plan, self-evaluation review, the school prospectus, school web site and newsletters.

5. Our actions

We follow Jesus' radical action of challenging injustice, discrimination, harassment and victimisation by:

- Ensuring that the School's Christian values of Compassion, courage, forgiveness, friendship, generosity, justice, perseverance, respect, service, thankfulness, trust and truthfulness.
- Ensuring that the Christian ethos of the school drives positive relationships
- Implementing policies that challenge prejudicial behaviours and promote equalities, especially in relation to bullying
- Reviewing the services and facilities of the school to ensure they allow access by all people
- Designing a curriculum that promotes equality and raises awareness of the protected characteristics

We follow Jesus' radical action of welcome by advancing equality of opportunity between different groups and meet our legal duty by:

- Implementing policies and practices that promote equality
- Monitoring all aspects of our work to identify any potential inequalities
- Being alert to the potential impact of any negative, prejudicial language or behaviour on particular pupils and groups of pupils.

We follow Jesus' radical action of universal and unconditional love to promote good relations by:

- Encouraging listening to one another's views
- Ensuring that our policies, procedures and activities promote equality
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards those with protected characteristics
- Encouraging respectful debate on matters where there may be differences in religious belief and practice
- Encouraging good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Encouraging mutual respect and good relations between genders
- Strongly challenging any discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of the protected characteristics.

6. Disseminating the policy

We ensure that this policy together with our vision and Christian values are known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plans are implemented.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- plan and deliver curricula and lessons that reflect the principles in above
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Pupils are expected to positively engage with each other and to live out the Christian ethos of the school.

Parents, carers and visitors will be informed of the school's policies and procedures with regard to equalities and are expected to be active partners in supporting the school.

8. Staff development and training

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

9. Breaches of the policy

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with in the same way that breaches of other school policies are dealt with, as determined by the headteacher and governing body.

10. 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 in relation to the admissions, pupil achievement, behaviour and attendance of pupils in the following subgroups:

- Gender
- SEND
- Ethnicity
- National origin
- Disadvantaged

11. Equality objectives

Our equality objectives are based on our analysis of data and other information. They focus on those areas where we have agreed to take action to improve equality and tackle disadvantage. The following equality objectives have for the four year period from September 2019 until September 2023:

- To monitor and analyse pupil achievement by race, gender and special educational need or disability and act on any trends or patterns in the data that require additional support for pupils.
- To deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, that provides opportunities for all pupils to achieve the highest standards of education, using specialist programmes and dedicated resources to support pupils who need it the most. We will deliver a programme of assemblies, outside visitors and educational trips to promote the ethos of equality to pupils and help pupils develop good relationships with people of different characteristics.
- To raise levels of parental and pupil engagement in learning and school life, across all activities including regular attendance to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement. We will aim to raise aspirations among children and parents and raise awareness of career options for all children, challenging gender stereotypes.

Date of Last review: November 2021