

# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Equality Policy

### Mission Statement

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn  
love and grow together”*

Autumn 2015  
To be reviewed Autumn 2016  
Reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee

### **Please read in conjunction with:**

Accessibility Plan  
Anti-bullying Policy  
Preventing & Dealing with Racial Incidents  
Education of Children in Public Care  
Special Educational Needs Policy

## 1. Equality vision and values

Pupil statements :

"No one in our school is left out because the teachers give the same amount of help to every pupil.

If something goes wrong we are always given another chance and we all come to school with smiles on our faces.

Every day we learn something new and we all work as a team. The grown ups are fair and they help us if we are stuck

We all have someone to play with at play time and no one is left out".

### Background Information

St Vincent de Paul School is a welcoming, happy and positive faith community where the unique identity and contribution of every member of the community is valued. We strive to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and respond to his command '**do to others whatever you would like them to do to you**' ( **Luke 6:31**). Our mission statement is central to the life and work of the school and guides us as we strive to maintain and respect the equality, dignity and rights of every individual i.e.

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn love and grow together"*

### 1. Legal Background

The Equality Act 2010 consolidated and replaced anti-discrimination laws introduced over the previous 40 years and is the single legal framework for tackling disadvantage and discrimination. The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force in April 2011, replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender. While there is no longer a legal obligation to produce an equality scheme, we believe it is best practice to produce written evidence to demonstrate compliance with equality legislation.

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector equality duties. We acknowledge and endorse the key aims of the Equality Act 2010 which focus on discrimination, equality, and good relations.

1.1 The general duty is that the school should have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate **discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- b) advance **equality** of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- c) foster **good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.2 We seek to foster a community, reflecting our mission statement, where:

- **discrimination** of any kind is unacceptable, as we maintain and promote a positive ethos of mutual respect and trust amongst pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- respect for the equal human rights of all members of our community is always evident and where relationships are enhanced through the teaching of pupils about **equality**.
- we promote positive **relationships** and attitudes to the diversity of all individuals, with due regard for their differences in ability, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, lifestyle, religion, sexuality and socio-economic background.

*It is important to note that "The principle underlying the concept of equality of opportunity is that treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them the same. The legislation requires that account should be taken of people's differing experiences, needs and histories, and of the differing challenges and barriers which they may face. The Act's definition of equality of opportunity is complex in its legal terminology but is of substantial importance". (Equalities Update for Herts. Schools Spring 2015).*

For the purpose of this policy our school needs to consider two key aspects of the legislation, (a) ensuring that the general duty embraces the day to day life of the school (b) as well as certain 'protected characteristics'. Therefore the policy is divided into two sections;

**Part A** shows our day to day commitment to Equality

**Part B** shows our regard for a legal requirement within the Equality Act (2010) to have a measurable objective (responding to the 'protected characteristics') which will span the next four years.

**Part A** Our day to day commitment to Equality (Specific Duties)

### 1.3 Aims

We aim to meet the key principles of the 2010 Equality Act and our Christian responsibility and commitment to achieving them by:

- providing an all inclusive Christian environment where our pupils can flourish and achieve.
- providing a learning environment where all individuals see their own identity valued and feel a sense of belonging to our diverse Catholic Christian community
- preparing children for life in a diverse society in which they are able to see their place in our school, Church and wider community
- including and valuing the contribution of all our families as they contribute to our understanding of equality and diversity within a caring Christian context

- providing positive information about different groups of people and especially about those from minority groups and other faiths.
- actively challenging discrimination and disadvantage in line with Gospel values.
- making inclusion a thread which runs through all our activities.

## **1.4 Objectives**

To achieve these aims we will meet our objectives within a caring and proactive Christian context. We will

- regularly monitor teaching and learning
- collect and analyse data to ensure all groups are progressing well and no group is subject to disadvantage
- use all available information to set suitable learning challenges for all, respond to pupils' diverse needs and overcome any potential barriers to learning
- ensure that the wider school curriculum especially the Religious Education curriculum, makes explicit and implicit provision to promote and celebrate equality diversity
- involve stakeholders in the development, review, evaluation, and impact of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures
- have high expectations of behaviour, demonstrating respect for others
- react and report thoroughly any deviations from our equality principles
- ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure equality of opportunity.
- involve stakeholders (school staff, governors, parents and pupils as appropriate) in the development, review, evaluation, and impact of all relevant improvement plans, policies and procedures

1.5 In addition, our school is committed to taking action on wider equality strands e.g. 'vulnerable' children such as those in public care, those with disrupted families and young carers. We will respond to vulnerable pupils in school, such as young carers, who may be subjected to discrimination. We will take appropriate actions to protect these vulnerable learners.

The Act requires schools to publish annually information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Therefore we will

- collect and analyse information, including stakeholder feedback, about progress in achieving the three aims of equality legislation.
- equalities data will be monitored by governors through normal data review processes. We recognise the importance of impact assessment and therefore this

will be considered at least annually by staff and governors. Key information will be published through parent newsletters and/or the school website.

**Part B** Our Longer Term Commitment to Equality, (response to the 'protected characteristics')

**Aim:** We aim to meet the key principles of the 2010 Equality Act and our Christian responsibility and commitment to achieving the aim, by having a measurable objective which will span the next four years. (Specific Duties).

**Objective:** We will achieve this by

- becoming a nationally recognised 'Rights Respecting School' and sustaining that achievement as the school moves forward

In 1989, governments across the world promised all children the same rights by adopting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention says what communities must do so that all children grow

- as healthy as possible
- can learn at school
- are protected
- have their views listened to
- are treated fairly

**These are their rights – these are what we are committed to achieve for all children.**

**Appendix 1: Impact Assessment** (*This was copied from the Herts guidance so we might not want to do it exactly as they suggest. We are no longer required to produce a formal impact assessment but it is deemed to be good practice to report on this area. I suggest that one Safeguarding meeting a year has a specific focus on this and then reports to the GB.*)

- 2.1 All school policies are reviewed for equality implications as part of the rolling programme of review and issues arising are identified and where required carried forward into the School Plan.
- 2.2 Key outcome data for equalities, e.g. bullying and racist incident data, identified imbalances in participation/achievement by group, and changes in school context data relevant to equalities will be included in the headteacher's termly report to governors and identified through analysis of the Raise Online report.
- 2.3 Progress on the delivery of specific equalities objectives will be reported to governors annually as follows
  - those related to staff will be addressed by the Resources Committee
  - those related to pupils and parents will be addressed by the Safeguarding or Teaching and Learning Committee, as appropriate.

- 2.4 A summary annual impact assessment (carried out by the Safeguarding Committee) of equalities will be reported to the full governing body, including against the following:
1. Identification of any specific concerns related to achievement levels by diversity strands
  2. Identification of any specific concerns related to attendance and behaviour by diversity strands
  3. Identification of any specific concerns related to bullying and racist incidents by diversity strands. Notification that all bullying and racist incidents have been dealt with promptly, recorded and resolved.
  4. Evidence that high levels of trust and confidence have been maintained from the full diversity of parents
  5. Evidence that the taught curriculum
    - reflects and celebrates the diversity of cultures and backgrounds represented in the school, the local community and in British society
    - is valuing and nurturing of individual pupils' identities
  6. Evidence that all school staff have received appropriate training or induction on equalities issues
  7. Progress on specific equalities objectives

## **Appendix 2: Checklist in line with the Herts LA recommendations – Spring 2015**

- Equality targets are set and an action plan is in place.
- It is important to note that other vulnerable pupils in school, such as young carers, may be subjected to discrimination. In addition to meeting the needs of the protected characteristics, schools must take appropriate actions to protect these vulnerable learners.
- Equality information is published.
- Governors have received training and understand their responsibilities and the actions required.
- Staff have received training and understand their responsibilities, recording incidents involving protected characteristics.
- Staff are developing a curriculum that is fully inclusive of all protected characteristics
- SMSC activities are promoting British Values

(The Safeguarding Committee will arrange to involve a representative group of stakeholders in the review of this policy on a bi-annual basis). **We agreed this a while back I think.**