



St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Equality and Diversity Policy

Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Assistant Headteacher (Catholic Life)

Evaluation

The policy was reviewed by the Director of Finance and Resources and Senior Leadership Team on 8th June 2023 prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Community Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Board for approval.

Policy Review Dates:

Date last approved by Full Governing Board 13th July 2022

Date submitted to Governors' Committee: 14th June 2023

Date submitted to Full Governing Board: 12th July 2023

Review Frequency: Annually

Start date for policy review: March 2024

Rationale:

There are Equality and Diversity policies available on several educational resource websites but St. Gregory's has to be mindful that as a Catholic School, whilst we have a duty to respect all designated characteristics, we also must be faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church. The policy below is one that is used by other Catholic High Schools.

This statutory policy is in line with legislation:

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011

Non-statutory guidance:

DFE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

See also related documents SEND and Local Offer and Accessibility Plan

1 Introduction

The Governing Board of St. Gregory's Catholic High School are committed to the principle of equality opportunity for all in employment and in the provision of teaching and learning.

Our school takes pride in our increasingly diverse community and all the cultural richness that it brings with it.

This statement outlines our commitment to equality and diversity. It sets out our intention to create an environment in which everyone in our school community can take full part in the cultural life of the school. It also sets out our commitment to advance equality and diversity among our students, their families and our staff.

2 Statement of intent

The Governing Board of St. Gregory's recognise that certain groups in society have been disadvantaged based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- religion or belief
- sex

We will have in place a range of actions to eliminate prejudice, unlawful discrimination and victimisation within the school community we serve and our workforce.

3 Our Aim

We want a strong, sustainable and cohesive community in our school. We will continue to develop and promote policies and systems that make sure the school community and our workforce are not unlawfully discriminated against.

Our aims are to:

- eliminate discrimination and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Create a school environment where all people regardless of characteristic can flourish

4 Our context

As a Catholic school for the whole community, we have a responsibility to the welfare of children in our care and to adhere to curriculum guidance. We would also ensure our beliefs are explained in a clear and appropriate way in an educational context that considers existing guidance on the delivery of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Religious Education. In this context, we know that we would not be acting unlawfully. Further, that it would not be unlawful for a teacher in our school to express personal views on sexual orientation if it is done in an appropriate manner and context (for instance in line with Roman Catholic teaching). We understand the influential role of a teacher and that their actions and responsibilities extend beyond the requirements of the equality legislation and that expressing personal views should not extend to allowing unlawful discrimination.

Acts of Worship

The daily act of collective worship is not covered by the religion or beliefs provisions which means that our school will not be acting unlawfully if we do not provide an equivalent act of worship for other faiths. The character and content of collective worship in St. Gregory's continues to be determined by the Governing Board and will be in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Liverpool

5 How we will deliver our commitment

The Governing Board has adopted the following principles:

- to recognise the value of diversity within the community, our workforce and our pupil body and the contribution made by people from different backgrounds.
- To be committed to ensuring that teaching and learning at St. Gregory's meets the varied and complex needs of all pupils in our care.
- To make sure our employment is accessible to everyone and that we value the variety of lifestyles and cultures within the community.

Our commitment is supported by a legal duty to provide learning and employment opportunities fairly, without unlawful discrimination. We believe we have a strong moral and social duty to recognise any unlawful discrimination, take steps to challenge prejudice and promote equality.

We understand that it is unlawful to discriminate against a staff member/pupil or prospective staff member/pupil by treating them less favourably on the basis of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership (refers to staff only)
- pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- religion or belief
- sex

We also understand that it is unlawful to discriminate based on association or perception (i.e.) because a person of whom the pupil or prospective pupil is associated has a protected characteristic, or if you think a person has a protected characteristic even if this is mistaken. We remain free to organise children in age groups and to treat them in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development.

6 Objectives

Accessible services and partnerships

Where appropriate, and at the discretion of the Head Teacher, we will work with other organisations and local voluntary and community groups to provide teaching and learning and access to employment which promotes equal opportunities to all by:

- Building on good practice
- Consulting with and involving our local community
- Providing accessible information and ways for people to comment
- Carrying out equality impact assessments of new and existing policies and practices to make sure that they do not unlawfully discriminate against anyone
- Removing barriers which deny people access to our school community
- Using our powers to make sure that organisations providing services on our behalf work in line with this policy
- Promoting an environment which gives all pupils an equal chance to learn and live free of unlawful discrimination and prejudice, all staff to work and live free of unlawful discrimination and prejudice
- Taking steps to build an inclusive and cohesive school community

Equal and appropriate treatment in employment, training and recruitment opportunities:

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that all employees understand their responsibilities under this policy
- Ensuring that all employees know about their rights of protection from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, including homophobic bullying or victimisation
- Developing and promoting policies which give everyone equal access to employment and opportunities
- Gathering evidence of the impact of our actions

7 Responsibilities

The Governing Board are an equal opportunities employer and provider of teaching and learning. To support this public commitment, all staff play a key role in ensuring that provision does not give rise to unlawful discrimination of any kind and that we have a shared understanding of the relevant issues and how best to deal with them.

All employees at St. Gregory's are expected to comply with our values of promoting equality and diversity and treat colleagues and others in our school community with respect at all times.

Leaders are expected to:

- Be at the forefront of best practice on equalities within their respective areas
- Set equality targets, monitor outcomes and develop relevant action plans
- Review all provision to ensure elimination of unequal treatment of staff, pupils and the wider school community
- Raise equality related issues with their staff and senior colleagues
- Encourage leadership on equalities amongst their staff and other providers
- Establish monitoring systems
- Report to Governors on the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring
- Train staff on equalities issues
- Consider better access for people with disabilities
- Monitor provision by contractors and other external providers
- Have evidence of consultation carried out with staff and the school community
- Make guidance readily available to staff