



# Equalities Policy Statement

January 2022

[updated January 2024]

## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Legal Framework
3. Protected Characteristics
4. General Principles
5. Publishing Information
6. Meeting Our Duties for Our Staff
7. Meeting Our Duties for Our Pupils
8. Meeting Our Duties for Our Directors/Governors
9. Roles & Responsibilities

Appendix A: Trust Equality Objectives

Appendix B: School Equality Objectives

Guidance is available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission:

[PublicSectorEqualityDutyGuideforSchoolsEngland.docx](#)

### Trust Mission Statement

We are a partnership of Catholic schools and our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

We will achieve this by:

- Placing the life and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do
- Following the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone so that we can all make the most of our God given talents
- Working together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and know that God loves us
  - Being an example of healing, compassion and support for the most vulnerable in our society

### Romans 12:4-8

#### Good News Translation

4 We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. 5 In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body.

## 1 Introduction

We welcome our general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations, and our specific duties to publish equalities information every year about our academies; to explain how we have due regard for equality; and to publish equality objectives which show how we plan to tackle particular inequalities, and reduce or remove them. We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

## 2 Legal Framework

The new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010, bringing together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that will provide a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the previous legislation to provide Britain with a new discrimination law, which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged are:

The Equal Pay Act 1970

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Race Relations Act 1976

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The Equality Act 2006, Part 2

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

## 3 Protected Characteristics

We recognise the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin

We will not discriminate either:

- **Directly\*** - by treating someone less favourably than we treat or would treat others because of one of the protected characteristics;
- **Indirectly** - by imposing a provision / criterion / practice (PCP);
- **By association** – because of someone's association with a person with a protected characteristic;
- When someone makes a **complaint** about discrimination or supports someone else's claim; or
- Because of something arising from a **Disability**.

\*We will have certain posts reserved for practising Catholics i.e. Chief Executive Officers and their deputies, Headteachers and their deputies, Lay Chaplains, Heads of Religious Education.

We recognise that protection from discrimination applies:

- at work – to employees;
- in education – to pupils;
- in governance – to Directors and Local Governors;
- as a supplier – when providing goods or services

## **4 General Principles**

We will act within the 7 principles set in the Equality Act:

1. All learners are of equal value: all learners and potential learners are of equal value and should benefit from the Schools policies, practices and programmes.
2. Relevant differences should be recognised: treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes must not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people face.
3. Workforce development: policies and programmes should benefit all members of the workforce, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
4. Positive attitudes and relationships should be fostered: policies and programmes should promote positive attitudes, good relations and positive interaction between all members of the community
5. Society as a whole should benefit: policies and programmes should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater cohesion, and greater participation in public life.
6. Current inequalities and barriers should be addressed and reduced: in addition to mitigating, avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, policies and programmes should take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist.

## **5 Publishing Information**

The Equality Act 2010 requires us to publish information that demonstrates that we have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

We will collect and use equality information to help us to:

- Understand the impact of our policies, practices and decisions on people with different protected characteristics, and thereby plan them more effectively to advance equality of opportunity;
- Assess whether we are discriminating unlawfully when carrying out any of our functions;
- Identify what the key equality issues are for each of our academies and plan accordingly;
- Benchmark our performance against those of similar organisations, nationally or locally;
- Take steps to meet the needs of staff who share relevant protected characteristics;
- Identify if there are any actions we can take to avoid discrimination and harassment, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations, including training for staff;
- Make informed decisions about policies and practices which are based on evidence about the impact of our activities on equality;

The Trust will set Trust-wide Equality Objectives and each school will set its own Equality Objective(s) - evidence of the steps being taken and progress being made towards meeting the equality objectives that the Trust/school has set itself will be published in future years.

## 6 Meeting Our Duties for Our Staff

**Recruitment and Selection:** Our policy on recruitment and selection follows model policy guidelines and ACAS best practice. Appointments are made based on merit, matching knowledge, skills and attributes to the essential and desirable criteria for the post. Our selection procedures are fair, transparent and recorded. Selection panels include at least one member trained in safer recruitment. Where employees have a disability then we will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments to the working environment.

**Staff Development and Training:** We ensure that all staff, regardless of job role, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. Priorities for training are identified in the relevant Improvement Plan for each academy. Staff with line management responsibility will be provided with advice and support from the central HR team to ensure that HR policies are applied fairly and consistently making reasonable adjustments where necessary.

We will publish our Gender Pay Gap Report annually on the government portal and on our website. We will monitor our Key Performance Indicators regularly to ascertain whether our policies and procedures have a disproportionate impact on any of the protected groups and this information will be reported to the Trust Board and action taken where appropriate.

## 7 Meeting Our Duties for Our Pupils

**Ethos and Religious Observance:** As a Catholic community we strive to create an ethos which reflects Christian values and these are evident throughout each academy in our daily Acts of Worship and in displays and on our websites. We will continue to promote and express these values. However, we respect the views and practices of other beliefs and religions and allow for expression of these views, including time off to celebrate key religious festivals and wearing of items which are essential to a religion where these do not present a health and safety risk.

**Curriculum and Learning & Teaching:** We keep each curriculum area or subject under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning addresses gaps in attainment between groups. Our teaching resources are reviewed to ensure there is no inbuilt bias which would negatively impact on a protected group. Our teaching seeks to challenge stereotypes by providing positive role models and appropriate teaching materials. We recognise that treating everyone equally does not mean treating everyone in the same way and we differentiate teaching materials to give all pupils equal access.

**Teaching of Religious Education:** Religious Education is taught from a Christian perspective with particular emphasis on the teachings of the Catholic Church. However, the curriculum for religious education is broad and balanced and allows for the exploration and understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

**Admissions:** We recognise that a significant proportion of our intake will be Catholic students and this is reflected in our Admissions Policies and Oversubscription Criteria which are fully compliant with the Admissions Code. Decisions relating to admissions are made solely on the basis of the agreed Admissions Policies which are set at Diocesan and Trust level and published in advance on the academy websites. Children with a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan, where parents name one of our academies, are given priority for admission under the Admissions Policy.

**Accessibility:** Each academy is developing an accessibility plan reflecting their accommodation and their pupils. Pupils with additional needs constitute a very diverse group: they include pupils with physical, emotional, behavioural, sensory or learning needs. We seek assistance from a wide range of agencies where appropriate: for example, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, medical practitioners, social workers and psychologists. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to enable pupils with additional needs to participate in academy life to the fullest possible extent. The academies work in close collaboration to ensure that the transition between phases is as smooth as possible for pupils.

**Responsibility to our Wider Community:** We strive as a Catholic community to develop responsible citizens with a strong sense of moral purpose. This is achieved through the many cross curricular projects and activities taking place, through our links with local parishes and through our charity fund raising to support local causes.

**Positive Behaviour Strategy:** Our academies operate positive behaviour strategies which reward appropriate behaviour based on our values and sets clear expectations relating to unacceptable behaviour, in particular any form of prejudice. Each academy records and reports on prejudice related incidents, particularly those categorised as homophobic or racist, and any bullying for whatever reason. Each academy has age appropriate behaviour policies in place to ensure that prejudice of any kind is challenged.

## 8 Meeting our Duties for our Directors and Governors

**Appointment and Election:** Appointment of Foundation Directors comes under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Bishop and also follows guidelines provided to us by NRCDES. Parent Governors are elected via a documented election process which is in line with guidance provided by the National Governance Association. Appointments and elections procedures are fair, transparent and recorded. Where Directors/Governors have a disability, then we will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments to assist them in their role.

**Development and Training:** We ensure that all Directors/Governors have appropriate and comprehensive training & development opportunities available to them. Priorities for training may be identified in annual Skills Audits and Governance Reviews. Directors/Governors are provided with advice and support from NRCDES, the Trust Governance & Compliance Manager, Governance Clerks and the Trust Executive Team to help support them in their roles.

## 9 Roles & Responsibilities

**The Trust** together with the relevant Local Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that each academy complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

**The Chair of Governors** in each academy will monitor progress against the Equality Objective(s).

**The Headteacher** at each academy is responsible for implementing the policy, for setting Equalities Objectives and publishing information; 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
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up to date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.
- treat work colleagues with respect and in line with the principles of this policy

**All pupils** are expected to:

- comply with the classroom codes appropriate to them and work with others in their classroom
- report any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- behave appropriately at all times in line with their academy behaviour policy

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Date Issued    | January 2022   |
| Date of Review | Review Policy Statement annually (OLoL) - January 2024<br>Review Trust/Academy Equality Objectives every 3 years (OLoL Trust Board /LGB)<br>June 2022 - January 2025 |
| Reviewer       | HR & Pay Committee / OLoL Trust Board  |

## **Appendix I - Trust Equality Objectives**

### **Our Pupils**

- There will be equality of access for all pupils to OLoL CMAT Schools.
- The curriculum will represent the diverse nature of society, encourage tolerance and respect and will take local context into consideration.
- Pupils and staff all contribute towards a happy and caring environment, supported by parents, where everybody shows respect for and appreciates one another as individuals without prejudice.

### **Our Staff**

- We will continue to develop a diverse workforce across our Trust that better reflects the communities we serve by taking to increase the diversity of our workforce through our recruitment and selection activities
- We will create a working environment that values difference and fosters an inclusive workplace culture, where Trust employees from all backgrounds can give their best, are treated fairly, valued for their contributions, and where they can progress their career through:

### **Our Governance**

- We will ensure & promote transparent, fair, inclusive and equal processes through providing recruitment and selection training to Directors/Chairs and Governors.
- We will achieve a broader, more diverse Governing Body across the Trust to better-reflect the communities in which we serve by reviewing the marketing of Governor vacancies, engagement with local community groups, to look to encourage a broader, more diverse composition.
- We will ensure Governors are fully aware of their roles & responsibilities and are able to provide the necessary level of challenge within their setting and across the Trust by supporting equality for all, helping remove any barriers and helping to eliminate variations in outcomes for different groups helping to ensure compliance whilst promoting a fair & inclusive of education provision and equal opportunities to help encourage each child to reach their potential



## **Appendix 2 - St. Philip Neri with St. Bede Equality Objectives**

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to in this Policy Statement, we are guided by seven principles:

### **Principle 1: All learners are of equal value**

We see all learners and potential learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whatever their gender and gender identity
- whatever their sexual identity.

### **Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference**

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to 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:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, and women and men, are recognised.

### **Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging**

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

### **Principle 4: 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:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whichever their gender.

### **Principle 5: 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 between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

### **Principle 6: We consult widely**

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.

### **Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit**

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys.

### **Our Curriculum**

1. We keep each curriculum subject or area under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven principles above.

### **Ethos and Organisation**

2. We ensure that the principles listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:
  - learners' progress, attainment and achievement
  - learners' personal development, welfare and well-being
  - teaching styles and strategies
  - admissions and attendance
  - staff recruitment, retention and professional development
  - care, guidance and support

- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

### **Addressing prejudice and prejudice-related bullying**

3. The school is opposed to all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling the legal duties referred to above:
  - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
  - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum
  - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
4. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they are dealt with.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

5. The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and action plan are implemented.
6. 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.
7. The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for co-ordinating implementation of the policy.
8. 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 paragraph 5 above;
  - support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language;
  - keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

### **Information and resources**

9. We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and their parents and carers.
10. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

### **Religious observance**

11. We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

### **Staff development and training**

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

### **Breaches of the policy**

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

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

14. We collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and make adjustments as appropriate.
15. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs; ethnicity, culture, language, religious affiliation, national origin and national status; and gender.

**St. Philip Neri with St. Bede Equality Objectives 2023 - 2024**

| Equality strand | Equality Objective   | Action(s)  | How will the impact of the action be monitored?  | Who is responsible for implementing?  | Success indicators  |
|-----------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| Gender          | To increase the proportion of boys working at greater depth, particularly in Writing. This is because the proportion of boys achieving GDS in Writing was lower than girls in 2023 summer assessments. | <p>Current year group data will be analysed by SLT and shared with class teachers at pupil achievement meetings.</p> <p>Interventions will target students working at ARE who have the potential to achieve GDS.</p> <p>Revise and strengthen Guided Reading provision in Key Stage 2 and move towards whole class texts to be studied to expose all children to high level vocabulary and sentence structure.</p> | <p>Termly data analysis (Advent &amp; Pentecost).</p> <p>Monitoring will confirm that boys are being exposed to high quality texts which allows them to achieve greater depth.</p> | SLT and KS Leaders will monitor success of interventions during pupil achievement meetings. | A greater proportion of boys will achieve GDS at the end of the academic year to reduce the gender gap. |

|                                       |   |   |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Gender<br/>Race<br/>Disability</p> | <p>To increase the awareness of protected characteristics.</p>                | <p>Liturgical prayer will be focused around protected characteristics to introduce these to children.</p> <p>Protected characteristics will be mapped throughout the curriculum to ensure they become embedded.</p>   | <p>Pupil interviews will confirm that pupils are able to name each protected characteristic and understand why each characteristic is protected.</p> | <p>SLT &amp; KS Leaders will monitor success of protected characteristic knowledge and teaching.</p>                           | <p>Children will be able to confidently name the protected characteristics and understand the reasoning behind having these.</p> |
| <p>Gender<br/>Disability</p>          | <p>To allow all children to have access to outdoor play provision (OPAL).</p> | <p>Update Uniform Policy so all pupils can access all aspects of OPAL play.</p> <p>Ensure the Play Team encourage all children to use resources, games and activities irrespective of gender, age etc.</p> <p>Analysis of play equipment used to ensure that it is safe for those with a physical disability.</p> | <p>Observations of play will confirm that children have access to play activities without gender/disability restrictions.</p>                        | <p>SLT and Play Coordinator and OPAL Curriculum Lead will monitor play to ensure it is appropriate and accessible for all.</p> | <p>All children will be able to access OPAL play without restriction.</p>  |