



St Matthew's Primary School

Equality Policy

including

Equality Statement and Objectives (Appendix)

Date Policy Written: January 2023 (amended January 2025)

Review Cycle: Annually

Ratified: March 2023

Next review date: January 2026

This Policy must be read in conjunction with: Bullying and Harassment Policy, procedures and Protecting Staff from Sexual Harassment Risk Assessment, Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy, First Aid Policy, Medical Policy (includes supporting children with medical conditions and administration of medicines), Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, RSHE Policy, SEN Policy, E-Safety Policy, LAC Policy

Background

This Policy reflects the Equality Act 2010 which harmonises and replaces previous legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Gender Recognition Act 2004 and Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The policy therefore supersedes all previous school policies on Disability, Ethnicity (i.e. Race) and Gender. Through this policy St Matthew's Primary School will fulfil its public duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in connection with disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity, and where appropriate, age (applicable to employees only). The guiding principles in this policy refer to all individuals and therefore are equally applicable to pupils, staff, and governors in addition to visitors to St Matthew's Primary School.

Legal Framework

Schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into effect in April 2011 and applies to public bodies, including schools. The PSED has three main elements:

- the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- the advancement of equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic* and people who do not share it;
- the fostering of good relations for pupils, staff and others using school facilities.

*Protected characteristics under the Act are:

- Sex
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership

Sexual Harassment

The Equality Act 2010 was amended in 2023 to place a greater emphasis on sexual harassment ([Worker Protection \(Amendment of Equality Act 2010\) Act 2023](#)). From 26 October 2024, employers have a legal duty to protect staff from sexual harassment. Employers must take

'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment against staff. This is covered in detail by the school's Bullying and Harassment Policy, procedures and Protecting Staff from Sexual Harassment Risk Assessment.

It should be noted that all schools have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and failure to do so could result in legal action against the school's Governing Body.

Employees of the school acting on behalf of the Governing Body are also liable for their own discriminatory actions. St Matthew's Primary School is mindful of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and will publish relevant information on the school's website: (i) Equality Policy (ii) Our Equality Objectives (see Appendix) and to monitor, and report upon these annually.

Ethos

St Matthew's Primary School is a dynamic, multicultural community with our children firmly at the centre of all we do. The school is committed to ensuring that the aspirations of each child who walks through our door grows and that they are given the skills both academically and socially to thrive.

The school's aim is to create a culture of aspiration, opportunity, security, thoughtfulness and confidence and to show children what is possible and on offer if they seek, imagine, endeavour, work hard, practice, enjoy, think, collaborate, persevere and challenge themselves....and others.

The school recognises children as individuals and our broad based curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities offer all children the chance to explore the world of learning and find their own passions and interests alongside academic skills.

This is achieved by the school, parents, children, governors and the wider community working together in partnership with shared goals and ambition, with integrity, with creativity, passion and dedication.

The aims of this policy are to demonstrate our commitment to:

- the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) that combines and builds upon existing legislation covering discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity

- having 'due regard' to equality considerations in all that we do
- value each person's worth, celebrating the individuality and cultural diversity of our school community, and showing respect for all groups
- promote the principle of fairness and justice for all through our curriculum (taught and wider), recognising that doing this may mean treating some pupils differently
- ensure that all pupils have equal access to the full range of educational opportunities provided by the school
- remove any forms of indirect discrimination that may form barriers to learning for some groups of pupils (may be only one in a group)
- ensure that all recruitment, employment, promotion and training processes are fair to all, and provide opportunities for everyone
- challenge personal prejudice and stereotypical views whenever they occur
- to treat everyone equally irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic
- achieve the highest standards of teaching and learning for all children irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other protected characteristic
- work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy

Principles and practice

St Matthew's Primary School is an inclusive school where we focus on the well-being and progress of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

We believe that the Equality Act 2010 provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

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.

We understand the principles of the Act and the focus needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity.

We recognise that this Act brings together into one Act those areas known as

'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection from discrimination. Protected characteristics under the Act are:

- Sex
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age
- Disability
- Marriage and civil partnership

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. We are opposed to any direct or indirect discrimination against individuals or groups whatever their age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We ensure that every person connected with this school feels safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

We have high expectations of all pupils and aim to provide them with every opportunity to succeed; providing the highest standards of teaching and learning within a curriculum that is broad, balanced, relevant and exciting. We will monitor the progress of all pupils in order for them to move forward in their learning and achievements and reach their full potential.

We are opposed to any member of the school personnel, or others connected with the school, being victimised, harassed or bullied by another based on assumptions about their status in the aforementioned categories or on any other grounds. Neither will anyone be discriminated against because of their political affiliation.

In order to achieve the aims of this policy we will take measures of positive action to encourage or facilitate the employment or training of minority or disadvantaged groups as we recognise that the avoidance of discrimination is not sufficient in ensuring that equality exists in this school.

We work hard to maintain a positive ethos where all members of the school community work well alongside each other developing positive working relationships.

Admissions and Exclusions

Admissions from Reception to Year 6 are managed by the local authority according to the published criteria which are fair and transparent, and do not discriminate on race, gender, disability or socio-economic factors.

Exclusions at our school are rare and are managed according to local authority guidelines. We will follow our Behaviour Policy in regard to such a decision being made.

Tackling discrimination

Harassment on account of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the school environment.

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.

Staff and governors should be aware of both direct and indirect discrimination and understand the differences.

Direct discrimination occurs when one person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a 'provision, criterion or practice' is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

Racist and homophobic incidents and other incidents of **harassment** or **bullying** are dealt with by the member of staff present, escalating to class teacher/deputy headteacher/headteacher where necessary.

All incidents are reported to the headteacher.

Recruitment Process

At St Matthew's Primary School we adhere to the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the recruitment process. We welcome applications for vacant posts from appropriately

qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body has the responsibility to comply with all aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

Our governors will:

- ensure that the school complies with equality-related legislation
- ensure that the policy and its procedures are implemented by the headteacher
- ensure all other school policies promote equality and give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions
- nominate a link governor for equalities to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the headteacher and to report back to the Governing Body
- take into serious consideration any complaints from parents, staff or pupils regarding equal opportunity

Link Governor

The nominated Link Governor will:

- work closely with the Headteacher
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date
- ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy
- attend training related to this policy
- report annually to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

Headteacher

Our headteacher will:

- implement the policy and its related procedures: ensure that this policy is embedded into the culture of the school
- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy; make all staff aware of their responsibilities and provide training as appropriate to enable them to effectively deliver this policy

- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality inclusion
- take appropriate action in any case of actual or potential discrimination
- ensure that all staff understand their duties regarding recruitment and providing reasonable adjustments to staff. It is unlawful for an employer to enquire about the health of an applicant for a job until a job offer has been made unless the questions are specifically related to an intrinsic function of the work
- ensure that all staff and pupils are aware of the process for reporting and following up bullying and prejudice-related incidents
- seek advice from appropriate agencies in order to ensure that this policy is kept up to date
- have high expectations of all pupils
- provide every opportunity for pupils to succeed by ensuring the highest standards of teaching and learning
- ensure the curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and exciting
- report to governors on a termly basis
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - scrutinising teachers' planning
 - scrutinising pupils' work
 - observing pupils throughout the school day
 - monitoring pupil progress
 - analysis of questionnaires and surveys with pupils, parents/carers and school personnel
 - analysis of pupil data
 - annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

St Matthew's personnel

St Matthew's personnel will:

- act as positive role models in order to promote equality throughout the school community
- abide by and adhere to this policy
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination and unequal treatment to the Senior Leadership Team
- maintain an overall school ethos of respect and tolerance for one another
- tackle bias and stereotyping
- promote equality, inclusion and good community relations

- challenge inappropriate language
- insist on good pupil conduct
- be alert to signs of racial harassment and bullying
- have high expectations of all pupils
- carefully monitor all groups of pupils to ensure that they make progress and achieve their targets
- provide a stimulating, relevant and exciting curriculum that will motivate and enthuse all students
- use a variety of teaching methods to ensure effective learning takes place for all pupils
- provide challenge for all pupils
- promote equality through curriculum planning
- ensure curriculum planning allows full access for all pupils
- provide specialised resources for pupils with disabilities
- create a positive classroom ethos that is welcoming to both sexes
- ensure pupils feel valued
- be open to the views of pupils
- encourage pupils to share their experiences of different cultures and different religions
- attend appropriate training sessions
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

Pupils

Our pupils will:

- Refrain from engaging in discriminatory behaviour or any other behaviour that contravenes this policy.

Parents and Carers

Our Parents and Carers will:

- Support our school in its implementation of this Equality Policy
- Adhere to this policy in their behaviour and the language they use
- Ensure their children attend and engage in the learning
- Inform staff about any prejudice related incidents that occur.

Complaints

The Complaints Procedure will be used to deal with any discriminatory complaint from any member of the school personnel.

Any case of harassment will be dealt with by the school's Disciplinary Procedure.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school website
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as weekly newsletters and end of half term newsletters
- Headteacher reports to the Governing Body.

Training

All school personnel receive training on this policy during induction which includes:

- Safeguarding
- Ethos
- Equal opportunities
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Inclusion
- Anti-bullying
- Curriculum
- Pupil Behaviour & Discipline
- Sex and Relationships
- Teaching and Learning

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

Appendix

Equality Statement and Objectives 2023- 2027

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). For schools, this means that it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals or treat them less favourably because of their sex; race; age; disability; religion or belief; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; pregnancy or maternity.

Under the Act, the school is expected to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This requires us to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

As a public organisation, we are required to:

- Have due regard to the PSED when making decisions, taking action or developing policy and practice.
- Publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty. This is done via our Equalities Policy.
- Publish Equality Objectives which are specific and measurable.

Our Equality Policy is in line with national guidance and contains information about how the school complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty. We also give guidance to staff and the wider school community on our approach to promoting equality.

Our Equality Objectives reflect the school's ethos and draw upon available data and other evidence. Careful analysis of this is undertaken in order to ensure that we are working to achieve improved outcomes for different groups.

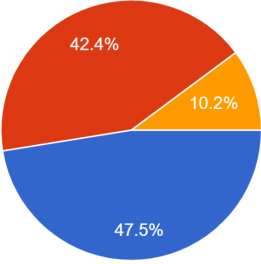
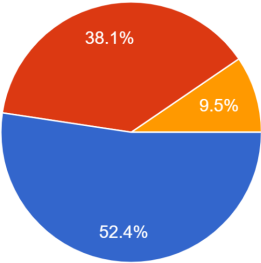
Equality Objectives 2023 - 2027

1. To continue to provide a school environment that welcomes, protects and respects diversity; including reviewing the accessibility across the school for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities.
2. To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through appropriate curricular opportunities, with particular emphasis on promoting equality and diversity thereby improving knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity.
3. To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school, particularly focusing on developing leadership opportunities for all students.

Annual review of targets

Target 1									
To continue to provide a school environment that welcomes, protects and respects diversity; including reviewing the accessibility across the school for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities.									
January 2024 Review	<p>Objective 1 To continue to provide a school environment that welcomes, protects and respects diversity; including reviewing the accessibility across...hool for pupils, staff and visitors with disabilities. 59 responses</p> <table border="1"> <caption>January 2024 Review Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>This is fully met</td> <td>76.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>This is met on most occasions</td> <td>23.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>This is not yet met</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	This is fully met	76.3%	This is met on most occasions	23.7%	This is not yet met	0%
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Target 2									
To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through appropriate curricular opportunities, with particular emphasis on promoting equality and diversity thereby improving knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable pupils to appreciate and value difference and diversity.									
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Target 3									
To ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school, particularly focusing on developing leadership opportunities for all students.									
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