

## St Margaret's Lee Church of England Primary School

### Equality Policy

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| <b>Date:</b> | September 2017 | <b>Review Date:</b> | May 2018 |
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#### Our Mission Statement

- We have high expectations of everyone
- We believe every child can and should achieve
- we want children to be happy and safe in our caring, Christian community
- We go the extra mile

#### Responsibilities

It is expected that all staff, pupils and adults will pay due regard to the feelings of others and their needs and will implement this policy to the best of their ability. A spirit of fairness and openness will be encouraged and negative stereotyping is prohibited.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we recognise the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who have particular protected characteristics and those who do not. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

#### Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- ensuring the implementation of this scheme to the best of their ability within the classroom and in their own dealings with staff, pupils and the school community
- contributing to discussions about equal opportunity issues and monitoring their own procedures and routines to ensure that pupils are treated equitably
- referring incidents and concerns, where appropriate, to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL).

#### School Staff

All school staff are responsible for:

- setting an example to pupils in terms of their treatment of one another and by displaying tolerance and understanding towards the beliefs and cultures of others
- ensuring that policies and procedures are implemented
- being vigilant for incidents of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of prejudice and acting upon them
- referring incidents and concerns, where appropriate, to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL).
- encouraging pupils to try new activities that challenge stereotypical roles and prejudices.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ensuring the place of equal opportunities within the school improvement plan (SIP)
- reporting the success of the school in promoting equal opportunities to governors on a regular basis
- monitoring incidents of racism, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour
- coordinating the curriculum in conjunction with subject leaders to ensure equality of opportunity is represented across the curriculum
- providing opportunity for resources to be ordered to support the promotion of equality
- continuing to monitor and formulate accessibility plans in conjunction with the governing body
- continuing to monitor the progress of actions identified on the equality objectives

### **The Governing Body**

The governing body is responsible for:

- ensuring that equality objectives and data are published and shared through the school website
- assessing the impact of the objectives
- making reasonable adjustments if the premises or employment arrangements limit access to particular community groups or individuals on the basis of disability or gender
- planning to increase over time the accessibility of school to disabled pupils

### **Pupil Attainment and Progress**

We recognise that avoiding discrimination and promoting equality supports the agenda of improving attainment and progression for all pupils. Good education and skills are crucial for opening up opportunities and increasing the chance of a successful life.

All groups of pupils in the school are carefully monitored to ensure that they make the progress expected and achieve their targets. Teaching staff monitor the progress of pupils that they teach. Pupil progress meetings with class teachers enable staff to identify any pupils who are falling behind and need additional support. In some cases, this will be individual support; in others, it will be an intervention programme as part of a group. Barriers to learning such as difficulties with attendance and/or family circumstances are addressed. In some cases, progress meetings may identify difficulties for a group of students and where this is the case, a collective support package will be used to address the needs of the children. Using a variety of data sources including government data and the school's own assessment data, the performance of all groups of students is carefully analysed. Any conclusions drawn from this are shared with the governing body and members of staff. This information is then used to inform the school improvement plan.

### **The Curriculum**

We provide a stimulating, relevant and exciting curriculum that motivates and enthuses pupils. Pupils are encouraged to gain confidence in non-stereotyping curriculum areas and mixed gender groups are part of the school's normal working practice. Planning takes account of the need for differentiation to provide full access for pupils with a range of varying needs.

### **Issues Specific to Disability**

The school is committed to promoting disability equality. It is vital that disabled pupils can access the curriculum. We provide a range of additional support, such as:

- carrying out a detailed assessment of the pupil's needs to inform action planning
- intervention groups targeting specific needs
- additional resources to support learning and develop skills
- differentiated work
- support from teaching assistants
- specialist equipment if required

We work closely with parents, pupils and other professionals including advisory teachers, speech & language therapists and educational psychologists in helping to include all pupils.

### **Issues Specific to Race Equality**

The school is committed to tackling racial discrimination and to encouraging good race relations. Under the Race Relations Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2010 there is a statutory duty to tackle racial discrimination. The school aims to prepare children for life in a multi-cultural society and to encourage appreciation of the benefits that diversity brings.

The school takes very seriously any allegation of racism and these are officially recorded and shared with Governors. Following the Macpherson Report, we define a racist incident as any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. The school procedures for recording and handling racist incidents are in Appendix 2 and these are reviewed annually. All members of staff will be made aware of these procedures.

The curriculum is the main way in which an understanding of other races can be communicated. At the school this includes:

- challenging stereotypes as they arise
- seeking out resources that reflect cultural diversity and promote other cultures in a positive way
- liaising with external services in locating appropriate resources
- involving people from a diverse range of cultures and nationalities in various activities and roles within the school
- monitoring and analysing data to identify areas of weakness/strength linked to particular groups.

The school encourages a spirit of enquiry and the open sharing of experiences and religious beliefs.

Children are encouraged to discuss their routines, particularly around times of major celebration.

The school also respects the needs of members of staff with different faiths, religions and beliefs and will always attempt to accommodate particular requests and requirements at different times of the year.

### **Issues Specific to Gender Equality**

All girls and boys at the school should be offered the opportunity to study and participate in the same curriculum activities. Teachers should have equal expectations of the children's ability irrespective of gender. Boys and girls will be expected to share equally a variety of tasks in and around the school including moving objects, washing up and tidying classrooms. The school will challenge perceptions that promote gender stereotyping.

### **Issues Specific to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Equality**

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender young people have the same needs as all other young people - they want to feel safe, included and are able to fulfil their potential. The whole school should be involved in creating an atmosphere where everyone feels they can be themselves. Procedures for dealing with allegations of homophobic and transphobic bullying can be found in Appendix 2.

### **Resources**

Resources are prepared and selected that are free from gender or cultural bias, where possible. Regular audits of resources help ensure appropriateness and relevance. Where bias is identified, attention will be drawn to this and may be used as a teaching point to promote discussion to challenge.

### **Listening to Our Pupils**

The School Council is well established at the school and provides a forum for pupils' views to be raised.

However, this is only one way in which we enable our pupils' views to be shared. We place priorities on ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to express their views regularly and that actions are taken that reflect how they feel.

This means including consultation and evaluation in all aspects of school life.

We actively encourage all groups to share their views through discussions with each other and with staff e.g. during class time, SLT presence at lunchtime. Listening to what pupils have to say alerts us to issues relevant to particular groups within the school and helps us to address these as they arise.

### **Involving Parents, Carers and the Local Community**

We seek to involve as many parents and members of the local community in our school as possible. We encourage active involvement through:

- written communications, such as newsletters, texts and emails
- an open-door policy with the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher

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- Parents' and Open evenings
- fundraising and community events
- attendance at and participation in concerts and other school events
- Friends meetings
- ensuring that where possible the Headteacher is in the playground to meet parents at the start and end of the day
- parental views questionnaires
- ensuring that parental concerns are followed up and reported back as a matter of priority
- Election of parent governors

### **School Procedures — Considerations**

Home circumstances have an effect upon pupils' experiences in school. We take into account the differences that exist and that may place extra pressure upon particular pupils at particular times.

Special factors that need consideration include:

- the effect that bereavements and illness can have on a family
- the impact of homework when pupils have commitments after school for religious observance
- the difficulties that some pupils experience in finding quiet zones to complete homework
- parents' difficulties with literacy and numeracy
- any faith or belief related implications for the curriculum
- requests for money for trips, charities and other extras that might cause difficulties for parents
- the particular circumstances of some families that might make holidays necessary in term time.

We address these considerations through:

- providing parents and carers with early notice of trips and additional activities
- keeping the cost of any trips as low as possible
- providing a fund to top up trips where insufficient funds can be raised
- ensuring that school catering provides for different dietary requirements
- providing appropriate training of staff to ensure that they understand any special requirements of the school community
- drawing up accessibility plans to help us ensure that the school provides physical access for all
- providing support for pupils with regard to homework tasks

### **Dealing with Issues**

We take pride in the way in which our pupils work together irrespective of differences:

- \*reporting any incidents of racism, sexism, homophobic behaviour or bullying to the Headteacher
- \*recording and addressing all incidents that are reported and recording any actions taken
- \*providing feedback on trends in incidents to the Governing Body
- \*taking advice from members of the local community and/or the LA where there are worrying trends or pressures
- \*applying our behaviour policy and appropriate sanctions where rules are broken working in conjunction with parents and carers
- \*being alert to signs of racial harassment and bullying
- \*developing an ethos where concerns can be raised and discussed
- \*maintaining awareness of issues relating to harassment and bullying.

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually, along with the Equality objectives and data.

## **Appendix 1: Key equalities legislation**

### ***Equal Pay Act 1970***

Entitles an individual to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex working in the same employment and doing equal work or equal value.

### ***Sex Discrimination Act 1975***

Prohibits sex discrimination against individuals in the areas of employment, education, and in the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises.

### ***Race Relations Act 1976***

Makes discrimination on the grounds of race unlawful in the areas of employment, provision of goods, facilities, services and premises.

### ***Disability Discrimination Act 1995***

Prohibits discrimination against disabled people in the areas of employment, provision of goods, facilities, services and premises, education and transport.

### ***Human Rights Act 1998***

Places a duty on public authorities to act in a way that is compatible with the European Courts on Human Rights. Public service employees and private citizens may sue the public authority for damages should they feel that these rights have been breached.

### ***Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999***

Provides protection from discrimination to those who have undergone, are currently undergoing, or intend to undergo, gender reassignment on the grounds of sex, in matters of pay and treatment in employment and vocational training.

### ***Race Relations Amendment Act 2000***

Places a general duty on public authorities to promote race equality throughout all their functions.

### ***Part Time Workers Regulations 2000***

Ensures that all part time workers are entitled to equal terms and conditions of employment as full time workers.

### ***Employment Equality (Religion/Belief) Regulations 2003***

Make it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against or harass a job applicant or employee on grounds of religion/belief (defined as any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief).

### ***Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003***

Make it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against or harass a job applicant or employee on grounds of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation (defined as sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, opposite sex or same sex and opposite sex).

### ***Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment) regulations 2003***

All employees and service providers have to make reasonable adjustments to physical features of their premises to overcome barriers to access.

### ***Civil Partnership Act 2004***

Allows same sex couples to make a formal, legal commitment to each other by forming a civil partnership providing them with the same rights and responsibilities as opposite sex couples who enter into a civil marriage.

### ***Gender Recognition Act 2004***

Allows transsexual people to apply for full legal recognition in their acquired gender. The Act also defines an individual's gender history as protected information, prohibiting employers from disclosing it.

### ***Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006***

Prohibits discrimination on grounds of age in employment and training and provides greater rights for employees with regard to requesting to work beyond normal retirement age.

### ***Equality Act 2006***

Includes the creation of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief or sexual orientation in the provision of goods, facilities and services, the management of premises, education and the exercise of public functions. It also places a positive duty on public authorities to promote equality between genders throughout all their functions.

### ***Equality Act 2010***

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

**Appendix 2: School procedures for dealing with allegations of racism\*, homophobia, transphobia or bullying**

*\*As stated in the McPherson report. a racist incident as any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.*

**In-school procedures**

Allegations of racism, homophobia, transphobia or bullying are referred to the headteacher and they are investigated at the earliest opportunity. In most instances, this will be immediately or soon after the allegation is made. In the absence of the headteacher, the deputy or assistant head follow the same procedure.

This will usually involve an interview of the alleged victim and of the alleged perpetrator and may often involve other witnesses, interviewed separately. Notes from the interviews are annotated during the interview and logged onto a password protected form\* (see Appendix 3) immediately following this, which is then circulated to all staff. Parents and carers of the alleged victim and perpetrator are informed and, if deemed appropriate, invited to a meeting to discuss follow-up action.

In all circumstances, the headteacher will take into account the potential risk of harm or abuse that involving parents may take. This may be harm or abuse directed at the parent's own child, at the alleged perpetrator/victim (or their families) or a member of staff. In such cases, the headteacher will consult with the safeguarding link governor and designated safeguarding lead on any decision not to involve a parent.

Allegations of racism, homophobia, transphobia and bullying logs are kept by the school and remain 'live' until the child leaves. Logs will not be passed on to secondary schools unless there is concern that the behaviour is likely to continue. In such cases, parents will be informed.

**Sanctions for perpetrators**

Sanctions will be vary depending on the age of the child and the nature of the incident. However, for all cases it will be made clear to the perpetrator (and the parents) that the incident is racist / homophobic, transphobic / bullying.

For the most serious of incidents or for persistent offences that significantly impact on the safety or well-being of another child or group, the sanction would be exclusion, in line with our school behaviour policy.

**Reporting to governors**

Anonymised data of allegations of racism, homophobia, transphobia or bullying is shared half termly at the Full Governing Body meeting.

