



St Martins CofE Primary School

Equality Policy

Legal Duties

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

The duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relationships

We understand the principle of the act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and given equality of opportunity.

A protected characteristic under the act covers the groups listed below:

- Age(employees)
- Disability
- Race
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual identity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership(employees)

In order to meet the duties above, the law requires us to carry out specific duties

- Publish equality information
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

These are recorded in our Equality Statement and Objectives.

Sandwell is a diverse community and as such we value and celebrate the richness of culture, backgrounds and traditions we share. St Martins CofE Primary School recognises and accepts that discrimination is a major barrier to a fair and just society. We are committed to achieving equality for all as a school and an employer, and aim to encourage diversity to flourish, in our steps to make St Martins Primary a Safer, Cleaner and Stronger community.

To this end we see the diverse communities and cultures in the borough as a positive force for the good of all. The school wishes to make our community a cohesive multicultural society in which difference is valued and celebrated and which understands the importance of local diversity in making the community a positive place of choice in which to live.

Our vision and commitment is to ensure equality of opportunity and equal access for everyone in school. In serving the school community our aim is to improve the quality of life for all our citizens and to facilitate their wider participation in the economic, educational, cultural and community life of St Martins CofE.

Definitions

Equal Opportunities

The right of every stakeholder (staff, parents, pupils etc) to not to experience discrimination or receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability is enshrined in legislation, and where inequality exists, we should take steps to identify it and address it.

Supporting Diversity

Every action taken by or within our school reflects a culture that values and respects people and which acknowledges the unique contribution they can make to that work. Diversity is a set of values that empower everyone to develop to the maximum of their potential and inclination.

Community Cohesion

The ability of a community to function and grow in harmony rather than in conflict. It has strong links to equality and diversity, given that that it can grow only when society as a whole recognises individuals have the right to equality (of treatment, access to services etc) and respects and appreciates/ promotes the diverse nature of our communities.

Principles

Our Equal Opportunities Policy is guided by the following principles:

- All employees, service providers, and partners in the community have a responsibility to promote equal opportunities and challenge every form of discrimination and stereotyping.
- Every pupil has access to high quality education that is appropriate to their needs.
- To work with our partner organisations to improve the quality of life for everyone and make the community free from discrimination and harassment.
- Recognition and valuing of the diversity that exists in our school.
- Every job applicant to the school is treated fairly.
- Every employee at our school is entitled to training and development and fair opportunities of promotion.
- To provide a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- To embrace those from different backgrounds and ensure all have similar life opportunities;
- Foster strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, school and in local community.

Policy Statement

St Martins CofE Primary seeks to reinforce the Local Authority's commitment to equal opportunities - with particular reference to children, young people and adults with Special Educational Needs.

It is the policy of the school that these stakeholders, whatever their background or circumstances, are entitled to have their needs identified, assessed and provided for (in terms of education) in ways which are:

- Non-discriminatory with regard to age, colour, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation, sex, gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity
- Appropriate to the nature and extent of needs;
- Effective, using the best available knowledge, skills, methods and materials;
- Prompt, within the resources of the service and continuity across the phases of education and in their roles;
- Reliable, using appropriate monitoring and review procedures;
- Inclusive in our school where appropriate resources are available.

Through adopting these principles, we hope to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Eliminating racial discrimination;
- Promoting equality of opportunity between people of different racial groups;
- Promoting good race relations between people of different racial groups;
- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- Encouraging participation of disabled people in public life;
- Taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even when that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people;
- Promoting gender equality and eliminating sex discrimination;

- Considering the needs of all staff, including those that identify as transgender or transsexual;
- Protecting staff from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment and training on the grounds of religion and belief, sexuality or age.
- Promoting community cohesion.

Well-being of the Community

The well-being of the school community, and thus individuals, is one of the key aims of St Martins CofE. Well-being involves all the things that impact on the quality of life for our community and individuals within it. This includes the relationships in the community and how inclusive it is.

We wish to ensure that St Martin's is a cohesive society in which difference is valued and celebrated, but which also has shared and common basic values. It also recognises the need to ensure that everyone in the community has a chance to take part in our society, and that all parts of the community should be fully involved in the school's decision-making processes and feel they have a voice.

The school has recognised that in order to meet its primary aim of improving the quality of life of all community members, it has to work in partnership with a number of external organisations, and settings, at local level.

Equal opportunities should permeate all aspects of school life, and is the responsibility of every member of the school community. This policy statement reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole school community. It has been drawn up as a result of discussion with representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, governors and pupil representatives. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all individuals within the school community.

All members of the school community should be aware that every individual has a right to be considered of equal value.

In the context of the school we feel the most appropriate definition is that:

'Equal opportunity is the right of everyone to equal chances, and each individual is respected for who they are.'

Ethos and Atmosphere

At St Martins CofE Primary School we are aware that those involved in the leadership of the school community are instrumental in demonstrating mutual respect between all members of the school community.

There should be an 'openness' of atmosphere which welcomes everyone to the school.

The children are encouraged to greet visitors to the school with friendliness and respect.

The displays around the school are of high quality and reflect diversity across all aspects of equality of opportunity.

Although physical access to the school is difficult under normal circumstances vehicular access to a school door can be easily arranged for disabled visitors.

Provision is made to cater for the spiritual needs of all the children through planning of both assemblies and classroom activities.

We engage with a number of local settings, are active in a number of cluster partnerships including those of a voluntary and community nature in order to achieve a common goal.

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or social background. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others. Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light.

Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils.

The adults in the school try to provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.

The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work (see SEN policy and Disability Equality Scheme/ Accessibility Plan).

The school provide an environment in which all pupils and staff have equal access to all facilities and resources.

All pupils are actively involved in their own learning.

A range of teaching methods is used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

The Taught Curriculum

We aim to ensure that our planning reflects our specific commitment to equality of opportunity in all subject areas and cross curricular themes in line with the National Curriculum.

Our planning takes account of the differing needs of pupils and their progression.

We have a commitment to evaluate our curricular outcomes as part of our monitoring and evaluation cycle to ensure that what we have actually planned takes place.

Resources and Materials

The provision of good quality resources and materials within school is a high priority. These resources should:

- reflect "the reality of an ethnically, culturally and sexually diverse society"
- reflect a variety of viewpoints show positive images of males and females in society including

- people with disabilities reflect non-stereotypical images of all groups in a global context include materials to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues be equally accessible to all members of school community consistent with health and safety not include explicitly and implicitly racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist materials. Our materials seek to promote all areas of equality.

Language

We recognise that it is important at St Martins CofE Primary that all members of the school community use appropriate language which does not transmit or confirm stereotypes does not offend creates and enhances positive images of particular groups identified at the beginning of this document creates the conditions for all people to develop their self-esteem uses correct terminology in referring to particular groups or individuals.

Organisation of Learning

When organising groups for various activities, consideration is always given to the composition of the group, to provide a balance appropriate to the activity. At school our environment is not culturally diverse, and we are very conscious of the need to provide first hand experiences for the pupils to encounter people from other cultures.

Extra-curricular Provision

It is the policy of this school to provide equal access to all activities from an early age e.g. girls playing football, boys playing netball and mixed teams wherever possible.

We undertake responsibility for making contributors to extra-curricular activities aware of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity (e.g. sports helpers, coach drivers) by providing them with written guidelines drawn from this policy. We try to ensure that all such non-staff members who have contact with children adhere to these guidelines.

Provision for Bilingual Pupils

At school to make appropriate provision for all bilingual groups to ensure access to the whole curriculum. These groups may include:

- Traveler children
- those from refugee families
- pupils whose home language is not a standard form of English
- pupils for whom English is an additional language.

While there is a need for pupils to learn to communicate in standard English we believe that their home language should be celebrated and respected.

Legislation

We are bound by the legal requirements of the following legislation:

Human Rights Act 1998

Civil Partnership Act 2004

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001

The Disability (Pensions) Regulations 2003

The Disability Rights Commission Act 1999

The Education (Modification of Enactments Relating to Employment) Order 2003: SI 2003/1964

The Education Act 1996: Part IV

The Equality Act 2010

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff. This must include pupil's access to a balance of male and female staff at both key stages. We undertake to encourage the career development and aspirations of all individuals. It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils in the various dimensions of equality of opportunity.

Harassment and Bullying

It is the duty of this school to challenge all types of discriminatory behaviour e.g.

unwanted attentions (verbal or physical)

unwelcome or offensive remarks or suggestions about another person's appearance, character, race, ability or disability, sexuality, gender.

Parents and the Wider Community

We aim to work in partnership with parents to help all pupils to achieve their potential. We wish to affirm our continuing commitment to reach out to other diverse groups within our immediate community and beyond.

Statement of Commitment:

In order to deliver this policy and our general duties, we are committed to the following:

- Developing equal access to all of our services;
- Equality self-assessment, scrutiny and audit on our service delivery;
- Engaging in consultation with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups;
- Equality action planning and equality target setting (where appropriate)
- Allocating specific resources for improving equality practice.

Equality of opportunity is identified as an area requiring careful and ongoing monitoring