



# Equality Policy

Committee Responsible - CC&SL  
Last review: 2020/2021  
Next Review: 2021/2022

## EQUALITY POLICY

### School Mission Statement

Empowered by the example of Christ, St Peter's Catholic School strives to promote the education and development of our children in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect.

This policy supports meeting the general aims of the school in particular:

- by encouraging each person to see themselves as a valued member of a wider community who can act independently and make a positive contribution for the good of all.
- by providing each child with access to all areas of the curriculum and supporting them to fulfil their individual level of achievement and acquire a thirst for knowledge

### **School Responsibilities in law**

Legislation requires schools both to avoid discrimination and to promote equality for students, staff and others using school facilities.

As a Catholic School St Peter's regards its mission and purpose to be the living out of Gospel values. Discrimination is incompatible with the example set by Christ in the Gospels.

### **Protected Characteristics:**

Gender  
Age  
Race  
disability  
sexual orientation  
religion or belief  
gender reassignment  
pregnancy or maternity

### **Unlawful behaviour**

The Equality Act 2010 defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour - direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

### **Direct discrimination**

This occurs when one person treats another less favourably, because of a protected characteristic, than they treat - or would treat - other people. This describes the most clear-cut and obvious examples of discrimination - for example if a school were to refuse to let a student be a librarian because she is a lesbian.

## Indirect discrimination

This occurs when a “provision, criterion or practice” is applied generally but has the effect of putting people with a particular characteristic at a disadvantage when compared to people without that characteristic. An example might be holding a parents’ meeting in an upstairs classroom, which could make it difficult for disabled parents to attend. It is a defence against a claim of indirect discrimination if it can be shown to be “a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim”. This means both that the reason for the rule or practice is legitimate, and that it could not reasonably be achieved in a different way which did not discriminate.

## Harassment

Harassment has a specific legal definition in the Act - it is “unwanted conduct, related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person”. This covers unpleasant and bullying behaviour, but potentially extends also to actions which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, cause offence to a person because of a protected characteristic.

Where schools are concerned, the offence of harassment as defined in this way in the Act applies only to harassment because of disability, race, sex or pregnancy and maternity, and not to religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. It is very important to recognise that this does **not** mean that schools are free to bully or harass students on these other grounds - to do so would still be unlawful as well as unacceptable. Any case against the school would be on grounds of direct discrimination rather than harassment.

Thus, if a teacher belittles a student and holds them up to ridicule in class because of a disability they have, this could lead to a court case alleging unlawful harassment. The same unacceptable treatment directed at a lesbian student, or based on a student’s religion, could lead to a case claiming direct discrimination. The practical consequences for the school, and the penalties, would be no different.

**Victimisation** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than they otherwise would have been because of something they have done (“a protected act”) in connection with the Act. A protected act might involve, for example, making an allegation of discrimination or bringing a case under the Act, or supporting another person’s complaint by giving evidence or information, but it includes anything that is done under or in connection with the Act. Even if what a person did or said was incorrect or misconceived, for example based on a misunderstanding of the situation or of what the law provides, they are protected against retaliation unless they were acting in bad faith. The reason for this is to ensure that people are not afraid to raise genuine concerns about discrimination because of fear of retaliation.

As well as it being unlawful to victimise a person who does a protected act, a child must not be victimised because of something done by their parent or a sibling in relation to the Act. This means that a child must not be made to suffer in any way because, for example, her mother has made a complaint of sex discrimination against the school, or her brother has claimed that a teacher is bullying him because he is gay, whether or not the mother or brother was acting in good faith.

If a student has himself or herself done a protected act - such as making a complaint of discrimination against a teacher - then the child's own good faith will be relevant. For example, if the parent's complaint is based on information from his daughter and the daughter was deliberately lying, it is not victimisation for the school to punish her in the same way as it might do any other dishonest student. Unless it can be clear that the father was also acting in bad faith (for example that he knew her daughter was lying) it would still be unlawful to victimise him for pursuing the complaint.

### **School Policy Statement on Discrimination**

'Belief in the equality and dignity of every human being is fundamental to the Catholic faith and Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools and Colleges will wish to ensure that they comply with the new laws for that reason.'

### **Promoting Equality**

Christ is the foundation of everything we do and the Gospels provide us with our influence and inspiration. We are therefore committed to promoting:

- **the uniqueness of the individual**

We believe that every person is a unique individual, created in God's image and loved by Him. We are therefore committed to treat every person with equality of esteem and the respect and dignity due to a child of God.

- **the search for excellence**

We are called to seek perfection in all aspects of our lives. We celebrate the enrichment of the total community which flows from human diversity. We are therefore committed to ensure that all are to be given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

- **the education of the whole person**

We offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values and working in harmony. Through this and a variety of educational experiences and interactions we aim to prepare young people for a life working with others in communities which maybe diverse socially, culturally and religiously. We recognise that it is also important to help students to understand their own ethnic identity and cultural heritage as well as helping them to understand that of others irrespective of whether the school serves or is located in an ethnically diverse community.

- **the education of all**

We have the duty to care for all, with preferential consideration for the poor, and to ensure that we provide for those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.

- **moral principles**

Our belief in the Gospel message commits us to be in the forefront of the movement for social and racial justice and harmony. We believe this is fundamental to the common good. We aim to prepare our young people to serve as witnesses to these moral and spiritual values in the wider world.

Consequently, we will strive to ensure that:

- any person recruited to the service of the school, whether as a member of staff or a volunteer, is made fully aware of our aims and objectives and required to support them;
- children who are admitted to the school and their families are fully aware of our aims and objectives and undertake to support them;
- all of our structures and policies are evaluated and kept under constant review in order to see that no individual is subject in any way to unlawful discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, and to ensure that all are enabled to reach their full potential.

Finally, we acknowledge that minority groups have often suffered disadvantage due to prejudice or ignorance. We recognise that it is all too easy for the structures of institutions to result in “inequality by default”. We therefore commit ourselves to take positive steps to examine our policies and practice and to change them where necessary.

### **School Context**

St Peter’s school is located in Merrow and serves a wide area of Surrey from Cranleigh to West Byfleet.

Approximately 70% of the children in the school would be classed as White British. The other 30% of children derive from a variety of ethnic backgrounds with the second largest group being White European (16%), which includes Irish, 4% are classified as White Other. The remaining 14% of children are from ethnic and racial minority groups.

A larger proportion of the children who are second generation White British have one or more parents who are from South America, the Philippines, and/or Spanish backgrounds, we therefore have a significant number of children who speak English and Spanish. There are also significant numbers of children who have one or both parents from Eire. Additionally there are significant numbers of children with links to Italy, Portugal and Poland.

### **Areas for Consideration:**

The school will endeavour to address discrimination in the all policies:

The school intends to:

- i. meet all the students’ needs, encouraging them to reach their full potential and raise educational standards
- ii. create a positive, inclusive atmosphere, based on respect for people’s differences, and show commitment to challenging and preventing discrimination
- iii. prepare students to be full citizens in today’s diverse society
- iv. make full use of the skills and knowledge of all people.

## **Policy, Leadership and Management**

St Peter's has prepared this policy as a commitment to work towards equality within the school. In addition, equality is an intended aim in all school policies and will be included in those as they become due for renewal within the framework of the School Development Plan. The Governing Body in seeking appointments to the Body and School will consider all applications equally and monitor all recruitment and selection activities to ensure that they do not discriminate.

### **Responsibilities**

- The Governing body - will ensure the school complies with the Equalities Act 2010.
- The Headteacher - will implement the policy and its related procedures and strategies, ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support, and taking appropriate action in any cases of discrimination
- The SENCO and the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Citizenship will have a specific responsibility for fulfilling curriculum requirements on issues of equality and discrimination and the school will deal with reported incidents of discrimination or harassment in accordance with the clearly laid out Behaviour Policy.
- All staff will follow policy procedures in dealing with incidents in accordance with the Behaviour Policy. The school will ensure training to allow staff to know how to identify and challenge bias and stereotyping, promote equality and keep up to date with equality legislation and research through training and development.
- Visitors and contractors - will be made aware of, and urged to comply with, the equality policy through a brief statement of the aims and intent of this policy displayed alongside the signing in book.

### **Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment**

As a school, St Peter's is committed to ensuring that all interests and issues, are built into all programmes of work throughout the curriculum, and that steps are taken to promote cultural diversity and challenge inequalities.

At St Peter's, teachers respond to students' diverse needs by creating effective learning environments which take into account the cultural background of students and diversity in the wider community, as follows:

- The contributions of all students are valued
- All students can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately
- Stereotypical views are challenged and students learn to appreciate all differences in others
- Students learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours
- All forms of bullying, including harassment, are challenged
- Children are encouraged to concentrate and are motivated to learn through the use of:

- a variety of teaching approaches appropriate to different learning styles
- the use of a range of organisational approaches, including different groupings and settings
- planning appropriately challenging work for those whose ability and understanding are in advance of their English language skills
- planning activities and using materials which allow all children to succeed, through reflecting social and cultural diversity and providing positive images of all protected characteristics.
- gender and disability
- using materials which are free from stereotyping and discrimination

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Approximately 13% of the students at St Peter's are children for whom English is an additional language, which is higher than the national average. Some arrive at the school with no previous educational experience in the U.K. The Inclusion Manager oversees the EAL provision and a member of staff is responsible for monitoring their welfare.

A dedicated TA spends time supporting EAL students in lessons. The school has purchased appropriate reading and early Literacy materials for EAL students in a variety of subjects. The principal languages spoken include Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino and Polish. The school benefits from having a Spanish speaker on the staff. Relevant materials have been purchased to support these children.

Appropriate opportunities are found to celebrate the variety of cultural backgrounds. The school is sensitive to emotional needs of children newly arrived due to loss of home and country and has invested in training to support social and emotional needs. Planning takes account of the student's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and their skills in other languages. Students are encouraged to express themselves in their mother tongue where literacy skills already exist in that language.

Throughout the early stages of English language development, children are provided with opportunities across the curriculum for meaningful talk, encouraging the development of vocabulary, supported by ICT, dictionaries and readers. This leads towards supporting the development of writing skills in all subjects.

### **Attitudes and Environment**

St Peter's supports ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic and social diversity, and actively promotes good personal, community and race relations. The school places strong emphasis on mutual respect and trust among students and staff, through its Christian ethos and its commitment to promoting respect for cultural diversity. Displays, resources and other materials around the school recognise diversity. The school's R.E. programme includes a study of all world religions. We are mindful that the Catholic Church is the largest multiethnic/racial institution in the world.

### **Breach of Policy**

## **Children**

In accordance with the Behaviour policy incidents of inequality and associated name-calling will be dealt with by staff whenever they occur. The Senior Leadership Team has overall responsibility for dealing with such incidents. Where there is recurrent antagonism, parents and guardians are contacted and informed of any action taken and the strategies and procedures associated with anti bullying will be applied.

## **Adults**

In the case of adults employed by the school any incident of inequality will be seen as a serious issue and may be dealt with under disciplinary procedures adopted by the Governing Body.

Where the adult is a visitor or volunteer they will be made aware of the school policy regarding inequality and future contact with the school reviewed by the Headteacher.

## **Promotion of the Policy**

The policy will be actively promoted to the whole school community through the use of assemblies, newsletters and posters. The policy will be displayed in the entrance hall for parents to read and on the school web site.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually and will make use of the regular review of other policies containing statements on equal opportunities. We will also monitor the achievements of students from ethnic minorities in the school to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum. Consideration will be given to the impact of the policy on the school community.

## **Equality Scheme**

At St Peter's, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for staff, students and all those receiving services from the school, irrespective of gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.

The achievement of all students is monitored on the basis of gender and other relevant factors and we will use this data to raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will aim to provide our students with a firm foundation that will enable them to fulfil their potential, regardless of stereotypes. We will seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination against students and staff by adhering to our duties as an employer under the legislation. At St Peter's we believe men and women were uniquely but equally created and their diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.



### Check list for school monitoring staff and governors

- Is information collected on protected characteristics with regards to both students and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is student achievement monitored by all protected characteristics? Are there trends or patterns in the data that may require additional action?
- Are all students encouraged to participate in school life equally? How is this shown through representation in school events such as class assemblies and the school council?
- Are all students given the same opportunities to participate in physical activity, both in and outside of school hours?
- Is bullying and harassment of students monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Are stereotypes in terms of protected characteristics challenged in both the classroom environment and in the playground?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when making selecting the topics for teaching and learning?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when acquiring resources?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when making changes to the class and wider environment?
- Are students encouraged to consider all career paths/occupations?
- Is the school environment as accessible and welcoming as possible to all visitors e.g. accessible to pushchairs? Are open evenings and other events that parents or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Are parents of both sexes encouraged to participate in their child's education e.g. attending parents' evening, taking up parent/ family learning courses, and assemblies?
- Are governing bodies representative of the students, staff and local community that they serve?

## **Employer duties**

- Are the protected characteristics considered when appointing staff and particularly when allocating Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) or re-evaluating staff structures, to ensure decisions are free of discrimination?
- Is bullying and harassment of staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when managing flexible working?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when managing pregnancy and return from maternity leave?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when managing grievance and disciplinary procedures?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when managing work based training opportunities?
- Are the protected characteristics considered when managing pay?

## **The Single Equality Duty**

### **What is it?**

The Equality Act 2010 introduces a single equality duty on public bodies which will be extended to include all protected strands - race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

### **The General Duty**

The combined equality duty came into effect in April 2011 and has three main elements. In carrying out their functions, public bodies will be required to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate conduct that is 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.

Where schools are concerned, age will be a relevant characteristic in considering their duties in their role as an employer but not in relation to students.

The Act also introduces specific duties, which are designed to help public authorities to meet their combined duty obligations.

### Specific Duties

The specific duties will be flexible, so that schools are not constrained to take action which is unnecessary or unproductive; light-touch, to avoid placing unnecessary burdens on schools; and proportionate. The duties do not represent rigid bureaucratic processes or a “tick-box” approach. The emphasis will be on transparency to allow local democratic accountability, from for example, but not limited to parents, the LA or action groups.

The specific duties are as follows:

- Publish information showing that they have complied with the general duty. (Appendix A)
- The information published must include information on the effect that the public body’s policies and practices have on equality for service users.
- Publish evidence of equality analysis undertaken.
- publish evidence of equality analysis they have undertaken to establish whether their policies and practices would further, or have furthered, the three aims of the general duty. (Appendix B)
- Publish details of engagement undertaken
- Publish information about engagements they have undertaken with people who have an interest in furthering the three aims of the general duty. (Appendix C)
- Set and Publish Equality Objectives. Appendix D
- Schools must publish equality objectives that will help them to further the aims of the general duty. These must be based on published equality evidence and analysis, and they must be specific and measurable. They must also publish how they will measure progress towards their equality objectives. Schools must publish their equality objectives and how they will measure progress. Subsequent objectives and accompanying information must be prepared and published at least every four years.

Data about employees will not need to be published where a school has fewer than 150 employees, which is the case at St Peter’s

## **Involvement and consultation**

St Peter's Catholic School consults all stakeholders in the development of our Equality Processes through:

Regular assessment and analysis of performance data which informs performance management information to all teaching staff.

Consultation of stakeholders through School Self Evaluation this will include focus groups, Student Voice and questionnaires.

Continuous monitoring

Comment boxes

School Development Plan consultation

Policy review

Monitoring of staffing trends and structures by the Staffing Committee

Stakeholders have a variety of ways to share their views and identify any issues for improvement; any matters raised are investigated and appropriate action taken in line with school policies.

## **Monitoring**

It is important to monitor the impact of the action taken to ensure that progress is being made towards meeting the Single Equality Duty, and to ensure that no adverse impact is occurring as a result of the actions.

The monitoring of the actions is outlined in the action plan. Equality issues are monitored through the implementation of all school policies.

## **Action Plan**

In order to ensure that action is taken to meet the Single Equality Duty, St Peter's School has drawn up an action plan. This area will be reviewed and actions identified for inclusion as appropriate in the School Development Plan.

For further information, please contact: Mr Miller (Headteacher).

## APPENDIX A: The Specific Duties - Information Showing the School has complied with the General Duty

DUTY	ACTIONS TAKEN
Eliminate conduct that is prohibited by the Act	The school has maintained a racist incidents log for a number of years and such incidents have steadily declined, and now register as <5 per year and generally no more than 1 per year. The school is currently extending this to cover other forms of prejudice related bullying
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,	<p>Over recent years the school has developed curriculum initiatives to advance equality, for example by introducing the study of particular texts in English that facilitate learning around diversity themes, e.g. we study poetry from a wide range of cultures at KS3 and to GCSE.</p> <p>The school also regularly participates in promoting diversity themes, eg Disability Awareness and challenging all forms of bullying including homophobic.</p> <p>We deliver an RE Unit to Year 8 entitled 'Created by God' which includes discussions on respect for others and understanding the difference between discrimination and prejudice, and knowing that both are wrong. It also explores the challenges faced by people with disabilities.</p>
Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	<p>The school has a well established Peer Mentoring and Support Programme with trained volunteers, part of whose role is to support vulnerable students and provide advocacy support.</p> <p>We also have Nurture Groups.</p> <p>Student Voice is a central aspect of our student culture and students are regularly and actively consulted on a range of issues.</p>

**Appendix B: The Specific Duties - b) Publish Evidence of Equality Analysis Undertaken**

Policy / Practice Considered	Outline how the policy / practice was evaluated (Examples shown below)	Outcome of analysis (Examples shown below)
Equal Opportunities including Race and Disability Discrimination Policy.	To be scrutinised by the Governors CC&SL Committee	There is now a single 'Equality Policy' rather than separate documents.
Behaviour	Students widely consulted through Student Voice	There is a renewed focus on consistency, fairness and a clear structure of progression. Students reported that they clearly understand the escalation structure and appreciate what the school's expectations are.
Anti-Bullying	Students consulted through student voice.	The behaviour policy addresses bullying. We have spent a significant amount of time focussing on the impact of cyber bullying - see calendar
Inclusion	Staff and Governors consulted.	We have a clearer focus on monitoring and tracking groups and individuals. There is a clear link here with disability discrimination and this is to be further developed to ensure that our students with SEN receive further appropriate support.
Recruitment and Retention	Staff / SLT / Governors / HR	Policy updated.

## Appendix C: The Specific Duties - c) Publish Details of Engagement Undertaken

Individual / Group engaged or consulted with.	Outline the nature of the engagement (Examples shown below)	Summarise outcomes from consultation (Examples shown below)
Local Parishes	Local clergy and other members of the community liaise regularly and participate in the life of the school to promote social and community cohesion, as well as the well-being and educational achievements of students from their community.	No significant issues raised as partnership is strong and ongoing. This will be reviewed regularly.
CAMHS - Community Adolescent Mental Health	Ongoing liaison and input to life of the school. Consulted on a range of issues pertaining to student well-being and the development of policy on Bullying, Behaviour, Inclusion and Equalities.	CAMHS representative continues to work with the school and advise on a number of issues.
National Autistic Society	Sought guidance on review of Inclusion policy and practice to better support students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.	Policy reviewed and now has best practice in place for students with ASD. This will continue to be reviewed to meet the needs of individual students

**Appendix D: The Specific Duties - d) Set and Publish Equality Objectives**

Characteristic	Objective (Examples shown below)	Success criteria (Examples shown below)	Date for review (Examples shown below)	Responsibility (Examples shown below)
Disability	To encourage more disabled students to attend St Peter's.	More disabled students make St Peter's their 1 <sup>st</sup> preference.	Ongoing - Jan 2020	HT / Head of learning support
Gender	To ensure that there are no inequalities of attainment	Through student monitoring we can ensure that both all genders achieve the same high standards.	Ongoing - reviewed through ASP annually	HOYs / AHT
Race	To raise awareness expectations of different ethnic groups at the school.	To recognise festivals related to different races	January 2020 - ongoing	AHT
Religion and Belief	To facilitate more open expression of faith and belief in the school community.	Actively celebrate a diversity of faith / belief events and holidays. Participation in whole school life of people of non-Christian faiths. Recognise and support an individual's commitment to practice their faith e.g. Ramadan	January 2020 - ongoing	HT / Govs