



# SS John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School

A Voluntary Academy

"Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn."



## Equality Policy

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## Equality Policy

*Our Mission at SS John Fisher and Thomas More is to value the uniqueness of every person in our Catholic Christian Community, realising that each individual is created in God's likeness. While striving for excellence we accept the children as they are and seek to teach them all the Gospel values with Jesus at the centre of all our lives. Prayer frames each of our days and strengthens us to fulfil our purpose as educators. We acknowledge our parents/carers as the first educators and appreciate their support and involvement in school life. Daily, we seek to provide opportunities and rich learning experiences to further the development of the whole child. We celebrate the children's achievements, strive to realise their hopes, encourage them to reach their goals and dream of whom they may become.*

### **Introduction**

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against an employee, an applicant for employment, a pupil or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or association with any of the above. It is also unlawful to discriminate because of age in relation to employment but this does not apply to pupils in schools.

### **Religion or Belief**

The Act provides an exception from the prohibition on religion or belief discrimination in relation to schools with a religious character. The exception applies to anything done in connection with admissions or in relation to the school's governing body (in the case of Catholic schools). The Act allows schools with a religious character to discriminate because of religion or belief in relation to admissions and in access to any benefit or service. St John's will be able to mark or celebrate events specific to the Catholic Faith or ethos without equivalent celebrations of events or acts of faith significant to other religions being celebrated. The 2010 Equality Act also introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which promotes equality for all.

It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
- Foster good relations between people from all groups

The Act provides that for Catholic Schools, they may give preference in connection with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of teachers at the school, to those whose religious beliefs or religious practice is in accordance with the tenets of their denomination. Likewise, they may give similar preference to those who give or are willing to give religious education at the school in accordance with the tenets of the Catholic Church. Conduct of a teacher which is incompatible with the precepts of the Church, or which fails to uphold its tenets, may be taken into consideration in determining whether the teacher's employment should be terminated. Preference can therefore be given to practising Catholics in appointments to teaching posts. This was extended to allow preference to be given to practising Catholics in non-teaching posts where there is genuine occupational requirement.

## Equality Commitment Statements

In accordance with our vision, we respect the equal rights of all our pupils and will educate them about equality. We also respect the equal rights of our staff and other members of the school community. We will comply with relevant legislation and implement school policy and plans in relation to race equality, disability equality and gender equality. Beyond those areas covered by our exemption as a Catholic School, we are committed to providing equality of opportunity to all pupils.

1. We are committed to combatting direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To achieve this we will ensure equality of opportunity is considered in:
  - Pupils personal, social and emotional development
  - Progress, assessment and attainment
  - Behaviour (including exclusions)
  - The curriculum
  - Curriculum enhancements
  - Teaching and learning
  - Admissions and attendance
  - Staff recruitment
  - Staff professional development
  - Partnership with parents & carers
  - Partnership with the community
  - Extended school provision
  
2. Teaching approaches that provide equality of opportunity include:
  - Ensuring that all resources and materials actively challenge racial stereotyping.
  - Ensuring that lessons are used to promote equality and pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics.
  - Ensuring that all children have equal access to the curriculum, taking account of their interests and concerns by using a range of activities and contexts for work and allowing a variety of interpretations and outcomes.
  - Avoiding gender stereotyping when organising pupils into groups, assigning them to activities or arranging access to equipment.
  - Taking account of pupils' specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to the representation of ideas or experiences or to the use of particular types of equipment.
  - Enabling the fullest possible participation of pupils with disabilities or particular medical needs in all subjects, offering positive role models and making provision, where necessary, to facilitate access to activities with appropriate support, aids or adaptations.
  
3. Every pupil should achieve high standards regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment through teaching, provision, support and challenge.

4. Equality issues will be considered in our policies, in our planning and in our decision making processes
5. Strategies are in place such as data and performance analysis and intervention groups to tackle underachievement
6. Behaviour management procedures are fair, effective and equitable.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Ss John Fisher & Thomas More Primary School will meet its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) by:

1. *Eliminating unlawful discrimination.*

Evidence of compliance can be found in:

- Staff induction process
- Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS)
- Termly behaviour incident reports to the Local Governing Body including information relating to racist & homophobic bullying
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies
- Staff development and training needs in the School Development Plan
- Safeguarding policy
- SEND policy
- Governor meeting minutes
- Complaints procedure
- Recruitment procedure interview notes
- Accessibility Policy & Plan

2. *Advancing equality of opportunity between people of different groups*

Evidence of compliance can be found in:

- Target & tracking data of all groups (ensuring that no group is underachieving)
- Termly Data Summary reports to staff (for Pupil Progress Meetings)
- Termly Data Summary reports to the Local Governing Body
- Pupil Premium Spending Plan
- Interventions put in place following termly Pupil Progress Meetings
- Data on incidents of bullying and any actions taken as a result (CPOMS).
- Individual Education Plans
- Provision Maps for each year group
- SEND tracking information
- Medical advice sought and plans put in place for pupils with conditions that may affect school life
- Liaison with professionals to remove barriers to learning
- Notes of SENDCo meetings
- School Development Plan
- Safeguarding policy
- SEND policy
- SEND Information report
- Teaching and learning policy

3. *Fostering good relations between people from all groups*

Evidence of compliance can be found in:

- Relationship & Health Education policy and scheme of work (Ten;Ten 'Life to the Full')
- Personal, Social and Health Education – Statements to Live By
- RE, Prayer & Liturgy
- Curriculum statements and overviews
- Behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- Teaching and learning policy
- Statement on British Values

Please note these lists are not exhaustive. Equality matters will be considered at SLT meetings and Governing Body meetings as part of the decision making process.