
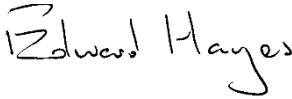


Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Multi-Academy Trust



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Policy Date:	18/06/20		Kate Hayles Head Teacher	
Policy Review Date:	18/06/22		Edward Hayes Chair of Governors	

Equal Opportunities Policy

At Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy, the growth and development of the whole child is considered paramount, as human life is a blend of the spiritual, the physical and the intellectual.

We believe prayer, worship and liturgy should be valued experiences which are an integral part of the daily life of the school.

The school would not function in isolation and will endeavour to forge strong links with homes, parishes and wider community.

It aims to provide a curriculum which meets the educational needs and enhances the growth of the child within his/her full Christian development.

Equal Opportunities Policy

INTRODUCTION

All pupils at Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy have an equal right to develop and achieve their potential. Equality of opportunity underpins the school curriculum and the work of the school. Children at Sacred Heart are treated as individuals with their own abilities, difficulties, attitudes, backgrounds and experiences.

The Education Reform Act entitles all pupils in school to a National Curriculum, which is balanced and broad based. The National Curriculum includes cross - curricular dimensions such as equal opportunities for boys / girls, multicultural education and special educational needs. Wherever possible the curriculum will develop children's knowledge and understanding of different beliefs, cultures and needs.

At Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy we aim for an atmosphere of trust and respect among children as well as between teachers and children. It is about how we treat each other and, more importantly, how we learn to respect one another and ourselves as citizens of the world. It also fosters an understanding of the diversity of cultures and needs that exist in school and in the wider community.

PARENTS:

We will introduce and communicate the Equal Opportunities policy to parents through the School Prospectus, Admissions meetings with parents and on Parents' Evenings.

CHILDREN:

It is the right of every child irrespective of race, culture, class, gender, special needs or ability to achieve their full potential. Each child should have access to an education, which will enable him / her to utilise their talents to the full and achieve their potential. We must develop children to become sensitive to and aware of ways in which equality of opportunity is denied and how this might affect them in society.

STAFF:

It is the responsibility of all staff to foster and facilitate this ideal by creating a welcoming environment for all children. They will endeavour to establish an atmosphere within school which effectively reduces prejudice and raises self-esteem, so that all children can develop independence, freedom of choice and knowledge of their rights to take on whatever roles they choose, no matter what their cultural background, gender or ability.

As a staff we have to remember that we are role models. We must challenge the concept of discrimination based upon differences of race, gender and special needs.

AIMS:

To ensure that:

- every individual within the school achieves their full potential and has the same opportunities
- every child is given access to the best possible level of achievement appropriate to its age and ability through appropriately differentiated work
- staff, parents and children are informed and educated, and reminded of the issues to ensure a continuity of approach throughout the school
- prejudices are challenged and positive attitudes are built
- understanding and mutual respect of all children, regardless of differences, is promoted
- contributions from various cultures are included and acknowledged in the planning and teaching of the full range of National Curriculum subjects, resources and school displays
- an awareness of the unfairness and injustice of stereotyping is raised
- any form of bullying including verbal, physical and psychological bullying by any group or individuals is challenged and addressed

- high levels of acceptable group and individual behaviour are promoted by ensuring that all the school community are informed of school expectations and procedures
- there is a commitment to minimising all school exclusions by implementing agreed strategies and procedures ensuring that each child is given the opportunity to achieve and succeed
- absences, racist incidents and bullying incidents are recorded and monitored.

EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIES used in school that will carry out these aims are:

- Planning activities of a non- stereotypical nature such as the home corner and apparatus.
- Giving children time to talk in class discussions to give everyone opportunity to voice opinion and discuss how they are feeling.
- Encouraging the sharing of experiences - encompassing all equality issues.
- Reviewing/updating resources so that appropriate messages are presented to the children.
- Planning role-play experiences to include addressing age, disability, race and gender.
- Providing a differentiated curriculum by developing classroom approaches that cater for individual differences but which do not make distinctions that have negative effects on children, their learning and development.
- Displays around school promoting positive equality issues.
- Providing an entitlement curriculum, which aims to offer the same balanced curriculum and learning experiences to all.
- Staff on playground duty to identify loners, the assertive group and negative physical contact.
- Children encouraged to think about the exclusion of others and the negative effect it can have.
- Involving children in rule making in the classroom and at a whole school level through the School Council.
- Using assembly time and collective worship themes to reinforce equal opportunity issues.
- Using targets and rewards for children to reinforce acceptable behaviour and attitudes.
- Ensuring that all children will have equal access to all resources. Some children will need encouragement / direction in the use of resources.
- Subject leaders to address equality issues within their subject.
- Giving children a voice, through the school council.
- Sharing in various religious celebrations throughout the year.

THE CURRICULUM

All children will have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life. We will need to monitor our practices to achieve this. Children should be given the opportunity:

- to make choices without rejecting any as being inappropriate, e.g. sport, monitor jobs
- to gain self-worth and self-confidence, freeing them to develop a sense of who they are and what they want
- to have equal educational experiences so that they can make appropriate choices from a base of common skills and knowledge.

RESOURCES

- Books, workcards, equipment and other resources will be checked to see that they are non-stereotyping.
- Children will be encouraged to learn to identify and question stereotypes if they are found in existing material.
- Resources such as computers, technology equipment and playground space will be allocated fairly.

HIDDEN CURRICULUM

- Displays will show positive role models.
- There is a need to discuss and counter prejudices and hidden beliefs.
- The development and sharing of common interests will be encouraged.

Children's individual characteristics and feelings need to be respected and valued.

STAFF TRAINING

Active participation of all school personnel is necessary for a successful policy. Staff meetings will take place as a means of monitoring / evaluating the policy. Also 'raising awareness sessions' will be planned. All the staff have responsibility for promoting Equal Opportunities.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Equal Opportunity will be recognised or highlighted in the following areas:

- SATs results
- Playground/classroom interaction
- Displays in school
- Perceptions of Governors and Parents
- Teaching styles
- Differentiated work on offer to parents
- Use of resources
- Teacher assessment

RACIAL EQUALITY

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY STAFF WILL TACKLE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

The main objectives we are working towards are:

- to prepare all children to live and work together, with equality of opportunity as part of a multi-racial world
- to build on the strength of cultural and linguistic diversity
- to raise awareness and enable children to recognise and challenge inequality
- to meet effectively the particular educational needs of all children.

IN THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS WILL:

- a) raise awareness of similarities and differences of individuals and groups
- b) where appropriate encourage positive role models from the community to support work in the classroom and arrange relevant visits to religious buildings
- c) have high expectations so all children achieve their full potential, as well as encourage a positive self-image
- d) give opportunities for children to express and evaluate their own opinions and to respect the opinions of others
- e) at all times encourage children to challenge stereotypes, prejudices and racism
- f) carefully choose books and materials and create displays that reflect the diversity within school, community and the wider world
- g) audit / monitor their subject ensuring equality issues are addressed
- h) be made aware of the ethnic mix, different religions and home language of children
- i) identify children for EAL support

Gender Equality

IN THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS WILL:

- (a) seek to organise the children to work together in mixed groups so they are less likely to develop antagonistic attitudes, e.g. encouraging them to line up in mixed pairs or by surname, keeping the register in alphabetical order
- (b) ensure that areas in the classroom do not become a predominantly male or female domain, e.g. home corner, construction area
- (c) enable children to work in single sex groups if need be, to develop enjoyment and confidence in particular subjects.

IN SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT WE WILL:

- celebrate the success of individuals
- avoid unnecessary separation of sexes, unless a specific educational purpose is being met
- ensure staff positions are not limited to one sex
- ensure all staff, teaching and non-teaching, are informed of the policy
- provide opportunity for girls and boys to see women and men in a wide variety of roles including work, domestic and recreational

- ensure that the discipline policy will be the same for both girls and boys
- make sure extra-curricular activities will be available to all children and timetabled to avoid stereotyped classes.

DISABILITY

All children are given the opportunity to recognise and respect individual differences and abilities. We are all unique and therefore have the right to be treated as individuals.

We will endeavour to:

- raise awareness of the varying needs of others
- highlight and celebrate the differences between each other
- raise awareness of the need for appropriate facilities to be available for people with disabilities, e.g. wheel chair ramps.

This will be achieved through:

- appropriate discussions
- topic links, e.g. work on the body
- visiting speakers
- appropriate resources, e.g. positive images in books/stories/displays
- following the inclusion policy.

HOME/SCHOOL LINKS

- Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy values links with parents and members of the local community and the contributions which they can offer to school life.
- If the need arises the school would actively support the needs of any parent who had difficulty in understanding communications from the school.
- Parents of children with Special Educational Needs will be kept informed of their progress in accordance with the Special Educational Needs Policy

APPENDIX A

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- The Headteacher and Governors of Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy support all personnel in their professional duties and will provide professional guidance and support when appropriate.
- The Headteacher and Governors aim to provide a pleasant and safe working environment for all employees.
- All employees will have access to training or professional development programmes.
- All employees will have access to a complaints/grievance procedure if they are unhappy about any aspects of their working conditions.

Recruitment Procedures:

- The Governors will act as fair employers. All jobs will be advertised and will be open to fair competition from applicants.
- Procedures which comply with the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act will be in force.
- Fair shortlisting and interviewing procedures will take place for all jobs based upon appropriate criteria which has been agreed by the Governor's Staffing Committee.
- Unsuccessful candidates will be offered a debriefing interview