



Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy and Scheme

**Implementation Date – 2017
Review Date – 2019**

Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy and Scheme

The overall objective of the St Michael's Community Academy Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy is to provide a framework for the school to pursue its equality duties to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment; promote equality of opportunity; and promote good relations and positive attitudes between people of diverse backgrounds in all its activities.

The principles of this policy apply to all members of the extended school community - pupils, staff, governors, parents and community members. Partners and contractors are also expected to abide by the policy.

1. Policy statement

Through this Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy, St Michael's Community Academy seeks to ensure that no member of the school community, or any person through their contact with the school, receives less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified. This covers race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility for children or other dependents, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, trade union or political activities, socio-economic background, where the person lives, or, spent convictions.

Equality and Diversity is more than just meeting legal obligations, or targets. It makes a difference to the lives of the people we serve, treating all people with dignity and respect, and recognising the value of each individual. This means an on-going commitment to ensuring that our services meet the varied and individual needs of children and young people in our school. We will make sure that our employment practices are fair and promote equality. We will actively value the wide variety of lifestyles and cultures, locally and nationally. We will prepare children and young people for living in a diverse society with increasing global connections and controversial issues.

2. Statutory requirements

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination,
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

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

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

- Age (for employees only)
- Disability
- Race (includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- Gender (including issues of transgender)
- Gender reassignment
- Maternity and pregnancy
- Religion and belief (includes lack of belief)
- Sexual identity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (for employees)

In order to meet our general duties, listed above, the law requires us to do some specific duties to demonstrate how we meet the general duties. These are to:

- Publish equality information - to demonstrate compliance with the general duty across its functions . **We will not publish any information that can specifically identify any child.**
- Prepare and publish equality objectives

To do this we will collect data related to the protected characteristics above and analyse this data to determine our focus for our equality objectives. The data will be assessed across our core provisions as a school. This will include the following functions:

- Admissions
- Attendance
- Attainment
- Exclusions
- Prejudice related incidents

Our objectives will detail how we will ensure equality is applied to the services listed above however where we find evidence that other functions have a significant impact on any particular group we will include work in this area.

We also welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

In fulfilling our legal obligations we will:

- Recognise and respect diversity
- Foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of belonging
- Observe good equalities practice, including staff recruitment, retention and development
- Aim to reduce and remove existing inequalities and barriers
- Consult and involve widely
- Strive to ensure that society will benefit

3. Guiding Principles

In fulfilling the legal obligations cited above, we are guided by nine principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

All learners and potential learners are of equal value and benefit equally from school policies, practices and programmes, whatever their ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

Principle 2: Relevant differences are recognised

Treating people equally can mean treating them differently. Policies, practices and programmes do not discriminate, but may be differentiated to take account of differences of life experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes, relationships and a shared sense of belonging

Policies and programmes promote positive attitudes and interaction, mutual respect and good relations, an absence of harassment or prejudice-related bullying between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in recruitment, professional development and promotion. Steps are taken to positively promote equality, especially where there is evidence of inequality.

Principle 5: Current inequalities and barriers are addressed and reduced

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of policies and programmes, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by addressing, reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist between people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

Principle 6: Policy development involves widespread consultation and involvement

People affected by a policy or programme are consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. Such consultation is both direct and through representative organisations, and is based on principles of transparency and accountability. It involves those who in the past have been excluded or disadvantaged, and who continue to face barriers:

Principle 7: Society as a whole benefits

Policies and programmes benefit society as a whole, locally, nationally and internationally, by fostering greater cohesion and greater participation in public life of people of different ability, background, gender or cultural identity.

4. Community cohesion

Children come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Socially children tend to come from the same socio - economic groupings. Currently 26% of children (114) have Free School meals.

There are 38% (165) children who access Pupil Premium funding.

St Michael's Community Academy has approximately 11% (48) of its children on Special Needs/ Inclusion register, with the overwhelming majority of these being either a School Action or School Action Plus. Within this, there are a range of special needs (Behavioural, Social and Emotional, SPLD, MLD and Physical). At the time this policy is written there are 5 Cared for Children.

13% (55) of children have English as an Additional Language.

There has been one permanent exclusion in the twelve month period preceding this document.

5. Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for :

- drawing up, publishing and implementing the school's equality objectives
- making sure the school complies with the relevant equality legislation; and
- making sure the school Equality Scheme and its procedures are followed
- monitoring progress towards the equality objectives and reporting annually

The principal is responsible for:

- making sure steps are taken to address the school's stated equality objectives;

- making sure the equality, access and community cohesion plans are readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, and their parents and guardians know about them;
- producing regular information for staff and governors about the plans and how they are working;
- making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out; and
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, including prejudice-related incidents.
- enabling reasonable adjustments to be made, in relation to disability, in regard to students, staff, parents / carers and visitors to the school.

All staff are responsible for:

- promoting equality and community cohesion in their work;
- avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone;
- fostering good relations between groups; and
- dealing with prejudice-related incidents;
- being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping;
- taking up training and learning opportunities.

The principal, Mr D Jobling is responsible overall for dealing with reports of prejudice-related incidents.

Visitors and contractors are responsible for following relevant school policy.

6. Staff development

Staff undertake training and development in relation to equality and cohesion in terms of professional responsibilities as well as statutory requirements as and when appropriate. This may take the format of staff meeting updates or full training sessions when needed. All staff are given equal opportunity to take part in staff training and have access to courses appropriate to their professional development and responsibilities as well as statutory requirements.

7. Publication and review

This Equality Scheme fulfils statutory requirements under the terms of legislation referred to above. As it is a public document, the school governors publish it by making it available on request.

The scheme will be kept under regular review for three years.

8. How we conduct equality impact assessment

As a school we carry out rigorous monitoring and analysis of all pupils and their progress each term so that the Principal, SLT, subject leaders and class teachers can use the information to ensure the appropriate progress is made by all pupils regardless of race, disability, socio-economic background, belief or gender.

Through analysis we are aware of any groups or individuals who are not making at least expected progress. Evidence of this analysis can be found in the Data file. Equality objectives identified by this process should be included in the three-year plan in Section 10 below, or in the School Development Plan as appropriate.

9. How we chose our equality objectives

Our equality objective-setting process has involved gathering evidence as follows:

- i. from the monitoring and analysis of pupil progress in the identified groups.

- ii. from the Monitoring and evaluation evidence file, SEN files, Gifted and talented files, Vulnerable pupil information
- iii. from involving relevant people including pupil and parental surveys.

The evidence was then analysed in order to choose objectives that will:

- i. promote equality of opportunity for members of identified groups
- ii. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and
- iii. foster good relations between different groups in terms of
 - ethnicity,
 - religion or belief,
 - socio-economic background,
 - gender and gender identity,
 - disability,
 - sexual orientation and
 - age

10. Equality Objectives 2016-19

(To be kept under regular review)

Equality objectives (focused on outcomes rather than processes)
<i>Ensure that children who are entitled to Pupil Premium make expected progress across the curriculum in relation to non Pupil Premium children.</i>
<i>Ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all children.</i>
<i>Ensure that staff and the governing body are aware of current legislation surrounding diversity and equality and understands the schools responsibility</i>
<i>Ensure that vulnerable groups of pupils achieve challenging targets and the gaps in attainment for these pupils are reduced. Pupils to make at least expected to good progress over each academic year.</i>
<i>To continue to raise attainment of Gifted and Talented pupils throughout the school and have access to all pupils to engage in extended school provision.</i>

11. Access Plan 2012-16

This can relate very closely to the disability elements of the equality objectives in Section 10 above, except that it covers pupils only whereas the equality plan includes all members of the school community.

	Actions (focused on outcomes rather than processes)
i. Improvements in access to the curriculum	<p>Reflect identified areas of need in lesson planning and delivery.</p> <p>Ensure access to computer technology appropriate for pupils with disabilities.</p>

ii. Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services	Ensure that access to school buildings and site can meet diverse pupil needs. Ensure that classrooms are optimally organised for disabled pupils within current restraints. Identify needs and actions for future improvements.
iii. Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils	Availability of newsletters and school documents in alternative formats. All staff to be made aware of children/parents with disabilities

12. Community Cohesion Plan 2016-19

The choice of appropriate actions to promote community cohesion is based on the needs identified in the contextual statement in Section 3 above, relating to ethnicity, religion or belief and socio-economic background.

For this purpose, the four geographical dimensions of “community” are as follows:

- the school community
- local communities
- communities across the UK
- the global dimension

	Actions (focused on outcomes rather than processes)
i. Teaching, learning and the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping children and young people to learn to understand others • to value diversity whilst also promoting shared values • to promote awareness of human rights and to apply and defend them • to develop the skills of participation and responsible action
ii. Equity between groups in school, where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure equal opportunities for all to success at the highest level possible • striving to remove barriers to access and participation in learning and wider activities • working to eliminate variations in outcomes for various groups

<p>iii. Engagement with people from different backgrounds, inc. extended services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to provide reasonable means for children, young people, their friends and families to interact with people from different backgrounds• build positive relations• receive services which build positive interaction and achievement for all groups
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